

ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

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THE MOONSTONE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WOMAN IN WHITE," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XXII.—(CONTINUED.)

I WALKED to the window to compose myself. The rain had given over; and, who should I see in the courtyard, but Mr. Begbie, the gardener, waiting outside to continue the dog-rose controversy with Sergeant Cuff.

"My compliments to the Saigent," said Mr. Begbie, the moment he set eyes on me. "If he's minded to walk to the station, I'm agreeable to go with him."

"What!" cries the Sergeant, behind me, "are you not convinced yet?"

"The deil a bit I'm convinced!" answered Mr. Begbie.

"Then I'll walk to the station!" says the Sergeant.

"Then I'll meet you at the gate!" says Mr. Begbie.

I was angry enough, as you know—but how was any man's anger to hold out against such an interruption as this? Sergeant Cuff noticed the change in me, and encouraged it by a word in season. "Come! come!" he said, "why not treat my view of the case as her ladyship treats it? Why not say, the circumstances have fatally misled me?"

To take anything as her ladyship took it, was a privilege worth enjoying—even with the disadvantage of it's having been offered to me by Sergeant Cuff. I cooled slowly down to my customary level. I regarded any other opinion of Miss Rachel, than my lady's opinion or mine, with a lofty contempt. The only thing I could not do, was to keep off the subject of the Moonstone! My own good sense ought to have warned me, I know, to let the matter rest—but, there! the virtues which distinguish the present generation were not invented in my time. Sergeant Cuff had hit me on the raw, and, though I did look down upon him with contempt, the tender place still tingled for all that. The end of it was that I perversely led him back to the subject of her ladyship's letter. "I am quite satisfied myself," I said. "But never mind that! Go on, as if I was still open to conviction. You think Miss Rachel is not to be believed on her word; and you say we shall hear of the Moonstone again. Back your

opinion, Sergeant," I concluded, in an airy way. "Back your opinion."

Instead of taking offence, Sergeant Cuff seized my hand, and shook it till my fingers ached again.

"I declare to Heaven," says this strange officer solemnly, "I would take to domestic service to-morrow, Mr. Betteredge, if I had a chance of being employed along with You! To say you are as transparent as a child, sir, is to pay the children a compliment which nine out of ten of them don't deserve. There! there! we won't begin to dispute again. You shall have it out of me on easier terms than that. I won't say a word more about her ladyship, or about Miss Verinder—I'll only turn prophet, for once in a way, and for your sake. I have warned you already that you haven't done with the Moonstone yet. Very well. Now I'll tell you, at parting, of three things which will happen in the future, and which, I believe, will force themselves on your attention, whether you like it or not."

"Go on!" I said, quite unabashed, and just as airy as ever.

"First," said the Sergeant, "you will hear something from the Yollands—when the postman delivers Rosanna's letter at Cobb's Hole, on Monday next."

If he had thrown a bucket of cold water over me, I doubt if I could have felt it much more unpleasantly than I felt those words. Miss Rachel's assertion of her innocence had left Rosanna's conduct—the making the new nightgown, the hiding the smeared nightgown, and all the rest of it—entirely without explanation. And this had never occurred to me, till Sergeant Cuff forced it on my mind all in a moment!

"In the second place," proceeded the Sergeant, "you will hear of the three Indians again. You will hear of them in the neighbourhood, if Miss Rachel remains in the neighbourhood. You will hear of them in London, if Miss Rachel goes to London."

Having lost all interest in the three jugglers, and having thoroughly convinced myself of my young lady's innocence, I took this second prophecy easily enough. "So much for two of the three things that are going to happen," I said. "Now for the third!"

"Third, and last," said Sergeant Cuff, "you will, sooner or later, hear something of that money-lender in London, whom I have twice

taken the liberty of mentioning already. Give me your pocket-book, and I'll make a note for you of his name and address—so that there may be no mistake about it if the thing really happens.”

He wrote accordingly on a blank leaf:—
“Mr. Septimus Luker, Middlesex-place, Lambeth, London.”

“There,” he said, pointing to the address, “are the last words, on the subject of the Moonstone, which I shall trouble you with for the present. Time will show whether I am right or wrong. In the mean while, sir, I carry away with me a sincere personal liking for you, which I think does honour to both of us. If we don't meet again before my professional retirement takes place, I hope you will come and see me in a little house near London, which I have got my eye on. There will be grass walks, Mr. Betteredge, I promise you, in *my* garden. And as for the white moss rose—”

“The deil a bit ye'll get the white moss rose to grow, unless ye bud him on the dogue-rose first,” cried a voice at the window.

We both turned round. There was the everlasting Mr. Begbie, too eager for the controversy to wait any longer at the gate. The Sergeant wrung my hand, and darted out into the courtyard, hotter still on his side. “Ask him about the moss rose, when he comes back, and see if I have left him a leg to stand on!” cried the great Cuff, hailing me through the window in his turn. “Gentlemen, both!” I answered, moderating them again as I had moderated them once already. “In the matter of the moss rose there is a great deal to be said on both sides!” I might as well (as the Irish say) have whistled jigs to a milestone. Away they went together, fighting the battle of the roses without asking or giving quarter on either side. The last I saw of them, Mr. Begbie was shaking his obstinate head, and Sergeant Cuff had got him by the arm like a prisoner in charge. Ah, well! well! I own I couldn't help liking the Sergeant—though I hated him all the time.

Explain that state of mind, if you can. You will soon be rid, now, of me and my contradictions. When I have reported Mr. Franklin's departure, the history of the Saturday's events will be finished at last. And when I have next described certain strange things that happened in the course of the new week, I shall have done my part of the Story, and shall hand over the pen to the person who is appointed to follow my lead. If you are as tired of reading this narrative as I am of writing it—Lord, how we shall enjoy ourselves on both sides a few pages further on!

CHAPTER XXIII.

I HAD kept the pony-chaise ready, in case Mr. Franklin persisted in leaving us by the train that night. The appearance of the luggage, followed down-stairs by Mr. Franklin himself, informed me plainly enough that he had held firm to a resolution, for once in his life.

“So you have really made up your mind, sir?” I said, as we met in the hall. “Why not wait a day or two longer, and give Miss Rachel another chance?”

The foreign varnish appeared to have all worn off Mr. Franklin, now that the time had come for saying good-bye. Instead of replying to me in words, he put the letter which her ladyship had addressed to him into my hand. The greater part of it said over again what had been said already in the other communication received by me. But there was a bit about Miss Rachel added at the end which will account for the steadiness of Mr. Franklin's determination, if it accounts for nothing else.

“You will wonder, I dare say” (her ladyship wrote) “at my allowing my own daughter to keep me perfectly in the dark. A Diamond worth twenty thousand pounds has been lost—and I am left to infer that the mystery of its disappearance is no mystery to Rachel, and that some incomprehensible obligation of silence has been laid on her, by some person or persons utterly unknown to me, with some object in view at which I cannot even guess. Is it conceivable that I should allow myself to be trifled with in this way? It is quite conceivable, in Rachel's present state. She is in a condition of nervous agitation pitiable to see. I dare not approach the subject of the Moonstone again until time has done something to quiet her. To help this end, I have not hesitated to dismiss the police-officer. The mystery which baffles us, baffles him too. This is not a matter in which any stranger can help us. He adds to what I have to suffer; and he maddens Rachel if she only hears his name.

“My plans for the future are as well settled as they can be. My present idea is to take Rachel to London—partly to relieve her mind by a complete change, partly to try what may be done by consulting the best medical advice. Can I ask you to meet us in town? My dear Franklin, you, in your way, must imitate my patience, and wait, as I do, for a fitter time. The valuable assistance which you rendered to the inquiry after the lost jewel is still an unpardoned offence, in the present dreadful state of Rachel's mind. Moving blindfold in this matter, you have added to the burden of anxiety which she has had to bear, by innocently threatening her secret with discovery, through your exertions. It is impossible for me to excuse the perversity which holds you responsible for consequences which neither you nor I could imagine or foresee. She is not to be reasoned with—she can only be pitied. I am grieved to have to say it, but, for the present, you and Rachel are better apart. The only advice I can offer you is, to give her time.”

I handed the letter back, sincerely sorry for Mr. Franklin, for I knew how fond he was of my young lady; and I saw that her mother's account of her had cut him to the heart. “You know the proverb, sir,” was all I said to him. “When

things are at the worst, they're sure to mend. Things can't be much worse, Mr. Franklin, than they are now."

Mr. Franklin folded up his aunt's letter, without appearing to be much comforted by the remark which I had ventured on addressing to him.

"When I came here from London with that horrible Diamond," he said, "I don't believe there was a happier household in England than this. Look at the household now! Scattered, disunited—the very air of the place poisoned with mystery and suspicion! Do you remember that morning at the Shivering Sand, when we talked about my uncle Herncastle, and his birthday gift? The Moonstone has served the Colonel's vengeance, Betteredge, by means which the Colonel himself never dreamt of!"

With that, he shook me by the hand, and went out to the pony chaise.

I followed him down the steps. It was very miserable to see him leaving the old place, where he had spent the happiest years of his life, in this way. Penelope (sadly upset by all that had happened in the house) came round crying, to bid him good-bye. Mr. Franklin kissed her. I waved my hand as much as to say, "You're heartily welcome, sir." Some of the other female servants appeared, peeping after him round the corner. He was one of those men whom the women all like. At the last moment, I stopped the pony chaise, and begged as a favour that he would let us hear from him by letter. He didn't seem to heed what I said—he was looking round from one thing to another, taking a sort of farewell of the old house and grounds. "Tell us where you are going to, sir!" I said, holding on by the chaise, and trying to get at his future plans in that way. Mr. Franklin pulled his hat down suddenly over his eyes. "Going?" says he, echoing the word after me. "I am going to the devil!" The pony started at the word, as if he felt a Christian horror of it. "God bless you, sir, go where you may!" was all I had time to say, before he was out of sight and hearing. A sweet and pleasant gentleman! With all his faults and follies, a sweet and pleasant gentleman! He left a sad gap behind him, when he left my lady's house.

It was dull and dreary enough, when the long summer evening closed in, on that Saturday night.

I kept my spirits from sinking by sticking fast to my pipe and my Robinson Crusoe. The women (excepting Penelope) beguiled the time by talking of Rosanna's suicide. They were all obstinately of opinion that the poor girl had stolen the Moonstone, and that she had destroyed herself in terror of being found out. My daughter, of course, privately held fast to what she had said all along. Her notion of the motive which was really at the bottom of the suicide failed, oddly enough, just where my young lady's assertion of her innocence failed also. It left Rosanna's secret journey to Frizinghall, and Rosanna's proceedings in the matter

of the nightgown, entirely unaccounted for. There was no use in pointing this out to Penelope; the objection made about as much impression on her as a shower of rain on a waterproof coat. The truth is, my daughter inherits my superiority to reason—and, in respect to that accomplishment, has got a long way ahead of her own father.

On the next day (Sunday), the close carriage, which had been kept at Mr. Ablewhite's, came back to us empty. The coachman brought a message for me, and written instructions for my lady's own maid and for Penelope.

The message informed me that my mistress had determined to take Miss Rachel to her house in London, on the Monday. The written instructions informed the two maids of the clothing that was wanted, and directed them to meet their mistresses in town at a given hour. Most of the other servants were to follow. My lady had found Miss Rachel so unwilling to return to the house, after what had happened in it, that she had decided on going to London direct from Frizinghall. I was to remain in the country, until further orders, to look after things indoors and out. The servants left with me were to be put on board wages.

Being reminded, by all this, of what Mr. Franklin had said about our being a scattered and disunited household, my mind was led naturally to Mr. Franklin himself. The more I thought of him, the more uneasy I felt about his future proceedings. It ended in my writing, by the Sunday's post, to his father's valet, Mr. Jeffco (whom I had known in former years) to beg he would let me know what Mr. Franklin had settled to do, on arriving in London.

The Sunday evening was, if possible, duller even than the Saturday evening. We ended the day of rest, as hundreds of thousands of people end it regularly, once a week, in these islands—that is to say, we all anticipated bedtime, and fell asleep in our chairs.

How the Monday affected the rest of the household I don't know. The Monday gave me a good shake up. The Monday of Sergeant Cuff's prophecies of what was to happen—namely, that I should hear from the Yollands—came true on that day.

I had seen Penelope and my lady's maid off in the railway with the luggage for London, and was pottering about the grounds, when I heard my name called. Turning round, I found myself face to face with the fisherman's daughter, Limping Lucy. Bating her lame foot and her leanness (this last a horrid drawback to a woman, in my opinion), the girl had some pleasing qualities in the eye of a man. A dark, keen, clever face, and a nice clear voice, and a beautiful brown head of hair counted among her merits. A crutch appeared in the list of her misfortunes. And a temper reckoned high in the sum total of her defects.

"Well, my dear," I said, "what do you want with me?"

"Where's the man you call Franklin Blake?" says the girl, fixing me with a fierce look, as she rested herself on her crutch.

"That's not a respectful way to speak of any gentleman," I answered. "If you wish to inquire for my lady's nephew, you will please mention him as Mr. Franklin Blake."

She limped a step nearer to me, and looked as if she could have eaten me alive. "Mr. Franklin Blake!" she repeated after me. "Murderer Franklin Blake would be a fitter name for him."

My practice with the late Mrs. Betteredge came in handy here. Whenever a woman tries to put *you* out of temper, turn the tables, and put *her* out of temper instead. They are generally prepared for every effort you can make in your own defence, but that. One word does it as well as a hundred; and one word did it with Limping Lucy. I looked her pleasantly in the face; and I said—"Pooh!"

The girl's temper flamed out directly. She poised herself on her sound foot, and she took her crutch, and beat it furiously three times on the ground. "He's a murderer! he's a murderer! he's a murderer! He has been the death of Rosanna Spearman!" She screamed that answer out at the top of her voice. One or two of the people at work in the grounds near us looked up—saw it was Limping Lucy—knew what to expect from that quarter—and looked away again.

"He has been the death of Rosanna Spearman?" I repeated. "What makes you say that, Lucy?"

"What do you care? What does any man care? Oh! if she had only thought of the men as I think, she might have been living now!"

"She always thought kindly of *me*, poor soul," I said; "and, to the best of my ability, I always tried to act kindly by *her*."

I spoke those words in as comforting a manner as I could. The truth is, I hadn't the heart to irritate the girl by another of my smart replies. I had only noticed her temper at first. I noticed her wretchedness now—and wretchedness is not uncommonly insolent, you will find, in humble life. My answer melted Limping Lucy. She bent her head down, and laid it on the top of her crutch.

"I loved her," the girl said softly. "She had lived a miserable life, Mr. Betteredge—vile people had ill treated her and led her wrong—and it hadn't spoilt her sweet temper. She was an angel. She might have been happy with me. I had a plan for our going to London together like sisters, and living by our needles. That man came here, and spoilt it all. He bewitched her. Don't tell me he didn't mean it, and didn't know it. He ought to have known it. He ought to have taken pity on her. 'I can't live without him—and, oh, Lucy, he never even looks at me.' That's what she said. Cruel, cruel, cruel. I said, 'No man is worth fretting for in that way.' And she said, 'There are men worth dying for, Lucy, and he is one of them.' I had saved up a little money. I had settled

things with father and mother. I meant to take her away from the mortification she was suffering here. We should have had a little lodging in London, and lived together like sisters. She had a good education, sir, as you know, and she wrote a good hand. She was quick at her needle. I have a good education, and I write a good hand. I am not as quick at my needle as she was—but I could have done. We might have got our living nicely. And, oh! what happens this morning? what happens this morning? Her letter comes, and tells me she has done with the burden of her life. Her letter comes, and bids me good-bye for ever. Where is he?" cries the girl, lifting her head from the crutch, and flaming out again through her tears. "Where's this gentleman that I mustn't speak of, except with respect? Ha, Mr. Betteredge, the day is not far off when the poor will rise against the rich. I pray Heaven they may begin with *him*. I pray Heaven they may begin with *him*."

Here was another of your average good Christians, and here was the usual break-down, consequent on that same average Christianity being pushed too far! The parson himself (though I own this is saying a great deal) could hardly have lectured the girl in the state she was in now. All I ventured to do was to keep her to the point—in the hope of something turning up which might be worth hearing.

"What do you want with Mr. Franklin Blake?" I asked.

"I want to see him."

"For anything particular?"

"I have got a letter to give him."

"From Rosanna Spearman?"

"Yes."

"Sent to you in your own letter?"

"Yes."

Was the darkness going to lift? Were all the discoveries that I was dying to make, coming and offering themselves to me of their own accord? I was obliged to wait a moment. Sergeant Cuff had left his infection behind him. Certain signs and tokens, personal to myself, warned me that the detective fever was beginning to set in again.

"You can't see Mr. Franklin," I said.

"I must, and will, see him."

"He went to London last night."

Limping Lucy looked me hard in the face, and saw that I was speaking the truth. Without a word more, she turned about again instantly towards Cobb's Hole.

"Stop!" I said. "I expect news of Mr. Franklin Blake to-morrow. Give me your letter, and I'll send it on to him by the post."

Limping Lucy steadied herself on her crutch, and looked back at me over her shoulder.

"I am to give it from my hands into his hands," she said. "And I am to give it to him in no other way."

"Shall I write, and tell him what you have said?"

"Tell him I hate him. And you will tell him the truth."

"Yes, yes. But about the letter——?"

"If he wants the letter, he must come back here, and get it from Me."

With those words she limped off on the way to Cobb's Hole. The detective fever burnt up all my dignity on the spot. I followed her, and tried to make her talk. All in vain. It was my misfortune to be a man—and Limping Lucy enjoyed disappointing me. Later in the day, I tried my luck with her mother. Good Mrs. Yolland could only cry, and recommend a drop of comfort out of the Dutch bottle. I found the fisherman on the beach. He said it was "a bad job," and went on mending his net. Neither father nor mother knew more than I knew. The one chance left to try was the chance, which might come with the morning, of writing to Mr. Franklin Blake.

I leave you to imagine how I watched for the postman on Tuesday morning. He brought me two letters. One, from Penelope (which I had hardly patience enough to read), announced that my lady and Miss Rachel were safely established in London. The other, from Mr. Jeffco, informed me that his master's son had left England already.

On reaching the metropolis, Mr. Franklin had, it appeared, gone straight to his father's residence. He arrived at an awkward time. Mr. Blake, the elder, was up to his eyes in the business of the House of Commons, and was amusing himself at home that night with the favourite parliamentary plaything which they call "a private bill." Mr. Jeffco himself showed Mr. Franklin into his father's study. "My dear Franklin! why do you surprise me in this way? Anything wrong?" "Yes; something wrong with Rachel; I am dreadfully distressed about it." "Grieved to hear it. But I can't listen to you now." "When *can* you listen?" "My dear boy! I won't deceive you. I can listen at the end of the session, not a moment before. Good-night." "Thank you, sir. Good-night."

Such was the conversation, inside the study, as reported to me by Mr. Jeffco. The conversation, outside the study, was shorter still. "Jeffco, see what time the tidal train starts to-morrow morning?" "At six-forty, Mr. Franklin." "Have me called at five." "Going abroad, sir?" "Going, Jeffco, wherever the railway chooses to take me." "Shall I tell your father, sir?" "Yes; tell him at the end of the session."

The next morning Mr. Franklin had started for foreign parts. To what particular place he was bound, nobody (himself included) could presume to guess. We might hear of him next in Europe, Asia, Africa, or America. The chances were as equally divided as possible, in Mr. Jeffco's opinion, among the four quarters of the globe.

This news—by closing up all prospect of my bringing Limping Lucy and Mr. Franklin together—at once stopped any further progress of mine on the way to discovery. Penelope's belief that her fellow-servant had destroyed her-

self through unrequited love for Mr. Franklin Blake, was confirmed—and that was all. Whether the letter which Rosanna had left to be given to him after her death did, or did not, contain the confession which Mr. Franklin had suspected her of trying to make to him in her lifetime, it was impossible to say. It might be only a farewell word, telling nothing but the secret of her unhappy fancy for a person beyond her reach. Or it might own the whole truth about the strange proceedings in which Sergeant Cuff had detected her, from the time when the Moonstone was lost, to the time when she rushed to her own destruction at the Shivering Sand. A sealed letter it had been placed in Limping Lucy's hands, and a sealed letter it remained to me and to every one about the girl, her own parents included. We all suspected her of having been in the dead woman's confidence; we all tried to make her speak; we all failed. Now one, and now another, of the servants—still holding to the belief that Rosanna had stolen the Diamond and had hidden it—peered and poked about the rocks to which she had been traced, and peered and poked in vain. The tide ebbed, and the tide flowed; the summer went on, and the autumn came. And the Quicksand, which hid her body, hid her secret too.

The news of Mr. Franklin's departure from England on the Sunday morning, and the news of my lady's arrival in London with Miss Rachel on the Monday afternoon, had reached me, as you are aware, by the Tuesday's post. The Wednesday came, and brought nothing. The Thursday produced a second budget of news from Penelope.

My girl's letter informed me that some great London doctor had been consulted about her young lady, and had earned a guinea by remarking that she had better be amused. Flower-shows, operas, balls—there was a whole round of gaieties in prospect; and Miss Rachel, to her mother's astonishment, eagerly took to it all. Mr. Godfrey had called; evidently as sweet as ever on his cousin, in spite of the reception he had met with, when he tried his luck on the occasion of the birthday. To Penelope's great regret, he had been most graciously received, and had added Miss Rachel's name to one of his Ladies' Charities on the spot. My mistress was reported to be out of spirits, and to have held two long interviews with her lawyer. Certain speculations followed, referring to a poor relation of the family—one Miss Clack, whom I have mentioned in my account of the birthday dinner, as sitting next to Mr. Godfrey, and having a pretty taste in champagne. Penelope was astonished to find that Miss Clack had not called yet. She would surely not be long before she fastened herself on my lady as usual—and so forth, and so forth, in the way women have of girding at each other, on and off paper. This would not have been worth mentioning, I admit, but for one reason. I hear you are likely to be turned over to Miss Clack,

after parting with me. In that case, just do me the favour of not believing a word she says, if she speaks of your humble servant.

On Friday, nothing happened—except that one of the dogs showed signs of a breaking-out behind the ears. I gave him a dose of syrup of buckthorn, and put him on a diet of pot-liquor and vegetables till further orders. Excuse my mentioning this. It has slipped in somehow. Pass it over, please. I am fast coming to the end of my offences against your cultivated modern taste. Besides, the dog was a good creature, and deserved a good physiccking; he did indeed.

Saturday, the last day of the week, is also the last day in my narrative.

The morning's post brought me a surprise in the shape of a London newspaper. The handwriting on the direction puzzled me. I compared it with the money-lender's name and address as recorded in my pocket-book, and identified it at once as the writing of Sergeant Cuff.

Looking through the paper eagerly enough, after this discovery, I found an ink-mark drawn round one of the police reports. Here it is, at your service. Read it as I read it, and you will set the right value on the Sergeant's polite attention in sending me the news of the day:

"**LAMBETH.**—Shortly before the closing of the court, Mr. Septimus Luker, the well-known dealer in ancient gems, carvings, intagli, &c. &c., applied to the sitting magistrate for advice. The applicant stated that he had been annoyed, at intervals throughout the day, by the proceedings of some of those strolling Indians who infest the streets. The persons complained of were three in number. After having been sent away by the police, they had returned again and again, and had attempted to enter the house on pretence of asking for charity. Warned off in the front, they had been discovered again at the back of the premises. Besides the annoyance complained of, Mr. Luker expressed himself as being under some apprehension that robbery might be contemplated. His collection contained many unique gems, both classical and oriental, of the highest value. He had only the day before been compelled to dismiss a skilled workman in ivory carving from his employment (a native of India, as we understood) on suspicion of attempted theft; and he felt by no means sure that this man and the street-jugglers of whom he complained, might not be acting in concert. It might be their object to collect a crowd, and create a disturbance in the street, and, in the confusion thus caused, to obtain access to the house. In reply to the magistrate, Mr. Luker admitted that he had no evidence to produce of any attempt at robbery being in contemplation. He could speak positively to the annoyance and interruption caused by the Indians, but not to anything else. The magistrate remarked that, if the annoyance were repeated, the applicant could summon the Indians to that court, where they might easily be dealt with under the Act. As to the valuables in Mr. Luker's possession, Mr. Luker himself must take the best measures for their safe custody. He would do well perhaps to communi-

cate with the police, and to adopt such additional precautions as their experience might suggest. The applicant thanked his worship, and withdrew."

One of the wise ancients is reported (I forget on what occasion) as having recommended his fellow-creatures to "look to the end." Looking to the end of these pages of mine, and wondering for some days past how I should manage to write it, I find my plain statement of facts coming to a conclusion, most appropriately, of its own self. We have gone on, in this matter of the Moonstone, from one marvel to another; and here we end with the greatest marvel of all—namely, the accomplishment of Sergeant Cuff's three predictions in less than a week from the time when he had made them.

After hearing from the Yollands on the Monday, I had now heard of the Indians, and heard of the money-lender, in the news from London—Miss Rachel herself, remember, being also in London at the time. You see, I put things at their worst, even when they tell dead against my own view. If you desert me, and side with the Sergeant, on the evidence before you—if the only rational explanation you can see is, that Miss Rachel and Mr. Luker must have got together, and that the Moonstone must be now in pledge in the money-lender's house—I own I can't blame you for arriving at that conclusion. In the dark, I have brought you thus far. In the dark I am compelled to leave you, with my best respects.

Why compelled? it may be asked. Why not take the persons who have gone along with me, so far, up into those regions of superior enlightenment in which I sit myself?

In answer to this, I can only state that I am acting under orders, and that those orders have been given to me (as I understand) in the interests of truth. I am forbidden to tell more in this narrative than I knew myself at the time. Or, to put it plainer, I am to keep strictly within the limits of my own experience, and am not to inform you of what other persons told me—for the very sufficient reason that you are to have the information from those other persons themselves, at first hand. In this matter of the Moonstone the plan is, not to present reports, but to produce witnesses. I picture to myself a member of the family reading these pages fifty years hence. Lord! what a compliment he will feel it, to be asked to take nothing on hearsay, and to be treated in all respects like a Judge on the Bench.

At this place, then, we part—for the present, at least—after long journeying together, with a companionable feeling, I hope, on both sides. The devil's dance of the Indian Diamond has threaded its way to London; and to London you must go after it, leaving me at the country-house. Please to excuse the faults of this composition—my talking so much of myself, and being too familiar, I am afraid, with you. I mean no harm; and I drink most respectfully (having just done dinner) to your health and prosperity, in a tankard of her ladyship's ale.

May you find in these leaves of my writing, what Robinson Crusoe found in his Experience on the desert island—namely, “something to comfort yourselves from, and to set in the Description of Good and Evil, on the Credit Side of the Account.”—Farewell.

THE END OF THE FIRST PERIOD.

CARABOBO.

BEFORE leaving Valencia, that pearl of Venezuelan cities, I resolved to visit the field of Carabobo. The name is little familiar to English ears, yet here Bolivar fought the battle which decided the liberties of the South American republics, and here British valour achieved a victory which deserves to be recorded in bronze and marble.

The battle-field is situated about eighteen miles south of Valencia. As I foresaw it would take some time to examine the ground, besides four or five hours at least for going and returning, and as a tropical sun in August is not agreeable, I determined to drive rather than ride. “What easier!” exclaims my European sight-seer. “Order a carriage, and the thing is done.” Carriages, however, being non-existent in Valencia, I was obliged to make search for a roofed vehicle of any description. At last my choice was a nondescript, strongly suggestive of the disasters which shortly took place. Into this I mounted with two or three friends about six o'clock on the morning of the 29th of August, 186—. We all lit our cigars, gave the word to old Domingo the driver, and started with a shock that broke one of the traces, and enabled us to get well to the end of our first cigars before even leaving the door.

To say that the streets of Valencia are not adapted for wheels, is to speak in the mild form which the Greeks thought advisable in discoursing of anything preternaturally bad. On this principle, one might say that these streets are paved, just as the Furies were called Eumenides. I had made up my mind to be “jolted to a jelly,” but another form of martyrdom was reserved for us. At the first turning there was a chasm, into which we were all but precipitated. At last we cleared it with a portentous jerk, but the triumph cost us so many fractures as to entail a delay which lasted through another cigar. We then got on pretty well through a street and a square, but only to find ourselves in a narrow lane, shelving laterally at an angle of thirty degrees, and full of holes and heaps of broken flagstones. Here we smashed the pole, and the driver went off for a fresh one, and did not return till we had consumed a third cigar.

The sun was already hot before we were off the stones. The road lay in the centre of a valley, which extended north and south as far as eye could reach, and was bounded to east and west by richly wooded ranges of mountains, some twenty miles apart, and from one

thousand to five thousand feet high. This valley cuts at right angles the far narrower one in which Valencia is built. At its northern extremity is the Lake of Tacaragua, and thence to the field of Carabobo, a distance of twenty-eight miles, there is a succession of plantations, many of them uncultivated since the late war it is true, and now unprofitable to the owners, but not the less luxuriant and pleasing to the eye. Were it not for snakes, insects, a vertical sun, fever, and a too rank crop of liberty, this valley would be Paradise. So we thought, and, falling into a benignant humour, we exchanged civil words with all we met. These were, for the most part, ragged fellows driving mules or asses, or mounted on miserable jades of horses, yet the usual salutation by which they were addressed was, “Good morning, general;” “Good morning, doctor.”

It was past ten o'clock A.M. before we got to a posada, which is the sole habitation near the Pass of Carabobo. The landlord was only a colonel, but in respectability of appearance he quite thrust several of the generals we had met into the shade. We asked what we could have for breakfast. Like innkeepers everywhere, he informed us we could have whatever we liked; but on our proceeding to name various desirable dishes, it turned out that none of them were forthcoming, and, in the end, we subsided into a meek acquiescence in eggs, which were, in truth, the only thing procurable. For this ovation, and two bottles of wretched wine of the country, the worthy colonel charged us only twenty-one shillings; so that we did not pay much more than a shilling an egg.

Having feasted after this fashion, we sallied forth to reconnoitre the locality in which the battle was fought. It was now past eleven, and the fierce sun made us appreciate what the combatants must have suffered from the heat on the memorable 24th of June, 1821. The English, at least, must have been sorely tried; but as for the natives, we had just then a proof of their powers of endurance, for a party of travellers went by, among whom were several girls, who had but a light mantilla drawn over their heads.

And here, after the fashion of the immortal Cervantes, it might be allowable to request the reader to suspend his interest in the battle of Carabobo, and turn aside to a lengthy episode in which could be related an adventure or love passage that befel one or other of our party then, or on some other occasion, or which it might be adroitly pretended that one of the said travellers, à propos or otherwise, recounted to us. But, to say truth, the sun was making havoc of my patience, and, so far from seeking matter for an episode, I besought the cicerone of the party to tell us all he knew, and to be brief about it, as I wanted to get under shelter again as fast as possible. The old general, however, had his own way of telling the story, and was not to be thwarted.

“You will never understand the battle,” said he, “nor appreciate it, unless you know some-

thing of the previous position of affairs. You see we had all been a good deal dissatisfied with Bolívar, who, on the 25th of November, 1820—the year before the battle—had concluded a truce for six months with the Spanish Captain-General Morillo. This took place at Santa Anna, a village in the province of Trujillo, to the west of Carabobo. It is true we got rid of Morillo by the armistice, for he went off to Spain as soon as it was signed; but he left La Torre, as good a general as himself, at the head of affairs, to say nothing of the famous Morales, who commanded the plundering hordes first raised by Yañez and Boreas. And if Morales had not been a traitor, and La Torre had kept his forces together and prevented Bolívar from joining Paez, who was posted with three thousand men at Achaguas, in Apure, to the south of this, the issue of the struggle might have been different. But Bolívar was right. He no doubt knew that Morales was disaffected because he had not been appointed to succeed Morillo; and the armistice gave the patriots time to mature their plans and to seize some important places, such as Maracaibo, under cover of the truce."

"All which," I observed, "redounds, of course, very much to the honour of the said patriots, and is a proof of their love of truth and respect for treaties."

"I cannot but think," continued the general, disregarding my interruption, "that, with eleven thousand choice troops such as the Spanish general had—veterans trained in combats with the French, and in many a stubborn fight in this country—the victory might have been wrested from Bolívar, in spite of the thousand British bayonets that supported him. But La Torre, who lay at San Carlos, about one hundred miles to the south of this, was induced by Morales to send some of his best regiments to defend Carácas against Bermúdez, one of our ablest officers, who marched on the capital from the east. Bermúdez, after many successes, was utterly routed at last under the very walls of Carácas. But, in the mean time, Bolívar had joined Paez, and was advancing against La Torre with equal, if not superior, forces. His army, when united, was formed in three divisions. The first, commanded by General Paez, was composed of the Cazadores Británicos, or 'British light infantry,' which was the remnant of the British Legion, or Elsam's Brigade, and now numbered not more than eight hundred men; one hundred of the Irish Legion attached to the English corps; the native regiment called the Bravos of Apure, eight hundred strong; and one thousand four hundred native cavalry; in all, three thousand one hundred men."

"The second division, commanded by General Cedeño, consisted of the regiments called Tiradores, Boyacá, and Vargas, and of the squadron Sagrado, commanded by Arismendi, in all about one thousand eight hundred men."

"The third division was commanded by Colonel Ambrosio Plaza, and consisted of the Rifles, a

regiment officered by Englishmen, with Colonel Sandes at their head, and the three regiments Granaderos, Vencedor, and Anzuátegui, with one regiment of cavalry, under Colonel Rondón. The numerical strength of this division was, in round numbers, two thousand five hundred men."

"The soldiers of this force were the best in the country. As for our battalion, a great general, it is said, pronounced that Englishmen fight best when well fed, but Carabobo proved that British courage does not depend on food alone. In fact, we English were desperate men, and much in the same mind as that of our forefathers at Agincourt. We were without pay, wretchedly clothed, and with no rations but half-starved bull-beef, which we ate without salt, that being a luxury unknown in Apure. Life itself had become hateful to us, and the men had been driven by distress, not long before, into open mutiny. The zeal of the officers alone extinguished the revolt, but many of us were wounded in quelling it. Order was at last re-established, but after scenes which I do not care to recall. Add to this, our commanding officer, Brigadier Blosset, was killed in a duel with Power of the Irish Legion, and this latter corps, all but the hundred men who were attached to us, had mutinied, and, after sacking Rio-Hacha, had been shipped off to Jamaica."

"Well, to go back a little before coming to the battle. I must tell you that it was the 10th of May when our brigade, under Paez, removed from Achaguas, a strong position on the frontier, between the provinces of Apure and Carabobo. We had been stationed there to watch Morales, who lay at Calabozo, about a hundred miles to the north of us. As soon as he retreated on San Carlos we advanced, and passed through the city of Guanare to San Carlos, from which the enemy retired. There we were joined by Bolívar, with Cedeño's division, and halted four days to prepare for the battle which was now imminent. At this time an order was issued that we English should act independently of the regiment Apure with which we had hitherto been brigaded. This turned out to be a most fortunate occurrence."

"We had now been marching for more than a month, and had suffered terrible privations. We had had to cross the river Apurito, and numerous streams swarming with alligators and with that still more dangerous pest the Caribe fish, which, though no bigger than a perch, has teeth which will penetrate a coat of steel, and which, at the scent of blood, comes in such myriads, that the largest animals, and even the alligator itself, are eaten up by them in a moment. Some of our men had thus perished in the water, and others had died on the road from the bites of snakes and venomous reptiles. A far greater number fell victims to want, fatigue, and disease. In short, our sufferings had been such, that there was not a man of us that was not resolved to die, fighting, rather than retrace his steps."

"The opportunity was at hand. On the 21st of June we marched from San Carlos, due east about a dozen miles, to the village of Tinaco. Our cavalry in advance, under Colonel Silva, had a sharp brush with the enemy, and brought in some prisoners. The same evening the third division, under Plaza, joined us, and brought up our strength to something over seven thousand. Next day, the 22nd, we pushed on due north, through the village of Tinnaquillo, and halted on the road to Carabobo, the enemy's outposts falling back before us, but not without sharp skirmishes.

"We had now the River Chirgua to cross, and then the defile of Buenavista. This is a formidable position, and if it had been occupied by the enemy we could hardly have forced it. Luckily, they had resolved on the Pass of Carabobo as the spot where they would give battle, so our advance on the 23rd was unopposed. That day, about noon, our vedettes came in sight of the Spanish army, and Bolivar halted us and formed us as if for the attack. Paez commanded the right, Cedeño the left, and Plaza had the centre. Bolivar then rode from left to right, and addressed each corps as he passed. His words were received by the others with silence, but when he had done speaking to the English, we gave him three hurrahs that were heard a mile off.

"It was only one P.M., but Bolivar determined to postpone the attack till next day, either to give us a rest, or because he thought it would be lucky to fight on San Juan's Day. We halted, therefore, and passed the night where we were. And such a night it was! The rain fell in torrents, and those of us who had been at Waterloo reminded one another that it was just the same there, and took it for a good omen.

"The weather in South America is always in extremes, and the sky was cloudless on the 24th, when we stood to arms. Our officers were grouped together, talking over the chances of the day, when an order came from Bolivar for the right division, in which we English were, to advance. It was now that the Creole regiment that was with us, called the Bravos of Apure, claimed to lead the attack. As a matter of right it belonged to us, we being the older corps, but considering the pretension on the part of natives of the country very natural, we conceded the point, and on they went. Our regiment followed, and then came the cavalry, under Paez, led by a squadron called Los Colorados, composed of two hundred supernumerary officers. The morning dawned bright and clear as we moved along the heights opposite the Spaniards. All was calm and still, as if Nature would contrast her peacefulness with the horrid uproar with which man was about to break in.

"We were moving to the west, to get round the enemy's right flank, if possible. We could see his guns and some of his infantry; but much of his force was hid by the trees and the broken ground, and a strong body of his men were

posted in a ravine, where they were altogether out of sight. But it is time to point out to you his position. This road, by which we came from Valencia, is the high road to San Carlos. The ravine which you see there behind us, coming down to it from the south-east, is called the Manzana, or 'Apple' ravine. Behind that were the head-quarters of the Spanish army. Their forces were in position in front of the ravine, and on the right of the San Carlos road, their guns being on their left flank—on that hill which you see completely commands the road. Had we advanced along the road, our column would have been swept by their guns, and exposed to an attack in flank, which must have proved fatal. On the other hand, the ground on the extreme right of the Spaniards you see there," said the old general, pointing to a series of steep hills and deep ravines, "was quite impracticable for regular troops and cavalry. Bolivar, therefore, after reconnoitring the enemy for about a quarter of an hour, sent us orders to attack by the ravine, which, as you see, lies between the hill on which were the Spanish guns and their infantry. This ravine we found so deep, that, on descending into it, we lost sight of the regiment of Apure. Meantime, the enemy's guns had opened fire, and men began to fall in both the battalions of our brigade.

"The crest of the ravine was lined by the enemy. The ground on which they stood slopes gently towards the mouth of the ravine, which is so steep, that I, for one, was glad to catch hold of the tail of a horse ridden by an officer in front of me. Directly the Apure regiment had got out of the ravine and were beginning to deploy, the enemy's cavalry threatened to charge it, but, either through treachery or cowardice, retreated before our cavalry, who now passed us on our right and charged, but were in their turn driven back by the fire of the Spanish line. Meantime, the Apure Bravos had formed line and advanced to within pistol-shot of the Spaniards, when they received a murderous volley from more than three thousand muskets, besides the fire of the Spanish artillery. Overwhelmed with this storm of shot, the regiment wavered, then broke and fled back in headlong disorder upon us. It was a critical moment, but we managed to keep our ground till the fugitives had got through our ranks back into the ravine, and then our grenadier company, gallantly led by Captain Minchin, formed up and poured in their fire upon the Spaniards, who were only a few paces from them. Checked by this volley, the enemy fell back a little, while our men, pressing eagerly on, formed and delivered their fire company after company.

"Receding before our fire and the long line of British bayonets, the Spaniards fell back to the position from which they had rushed in pursuit of the Apure Bravos. But from thence they kept up a tremendous fire upon us, which we returned as rapidly as we could. As they outnumbered us in the ratio of four to one, and were strongly posted and supported by guns,

we waited for reinforcements before storming their position. Not a man, however, came to help us, and after an hour passed in this manner our ammunition failed. It then really seemed to be all over with us. We tried, as best we could, to make signals of our distress; the men kept springing their ramrods, and Colonel Thomas Ferrier, our commanding officer, apprised General Paez of our situation, and called on him to get up a supply of cartridges. It came at last; but by this time many of our officers and men had fallen, and among them Colonel Ferrier. You may imagine we were not long in breaking open the ammunition-boxes; the men numbered off anew, and after delivering a couple of volleys we prepared to charge. At this moment our cavalry, passing as before by our right flank, charged, with General Paez at their head. They went on very gallantly, but soon came galloping back and passed again to our rear, without having done any execution on the enemy, while they had themselves suffered considerably.

"Why Bolivar at this time, and indeed during the period since our first advance, sent us no support, I have never been able to guess. Whatever the motive, it is certain that the second and third divisions of the army quietly looked on while we were being slaughtered, and made no attempt to help us. The curses of our men were loud and deep, but seeing that they must not expect any help, they made up their minds to carry the enemy's position, or perish. Out of nine hundred men we had not above six hundred left; Captain Scott, who succeeded Colonel Ferrier, had fallen, and had bequeathed the command to Captain Minchin; and the colours of the regiment had seven times changed hands, and had been literally cut to ribands, and dyed with the blood of the gallant fellows who carried them. But, in spite of all this, the word was passed to charge with the bayonet, and on we went, keeping our line as steadily as on a parade day, and with a loud hurrah we were upon them. I must do the Spaniards the justice to say they met us gallantly, and the struggle was for a brief time fierce, and the event doubtful. But the bayonet in the hands of British soldiers, more especially such a forlorn hope as we were, is irresistible. The Spaniards, five to one as they were, began to give ground, and at last broke and fled.

"Then it was, and not till then, that two companies of the Tiradores came up to our help, and our cavalry, hitherto of little use, fiercely pursued the retreating enemy. What followed I tell you on hearsay from others, for I was now stretched on the field with two balls through my body. I know, however, that the famous battalion of royalists called 'Valence,' under their gallant colonel Don Tomas Garcia, covered the enemy's retreat, and was never broken. Again and again this noble regiment turned sullenly on its pursuers, and successfully repulsed the attacks of the cavalry and infantry of the third division

of our army, which now for the first time left their secure position and pursued the Spaniards.

"It was at this period of the battle that General Cedeño, stung by a rebuke from Bolivar, quitted the third division, which he was commanding, and at the head of a small body of followers charged the regiment 'Valence,' and found, with all his comrades, the honourable death they sought. So fell 'the bravest of the brave of Columbia.' Plaza also, who commanded the second division, was killed, and also Mellao, another famous hero of the patriots. As for our regiment, it had been too severely handled to join in the pursuit with much vigour. Two men out of every three were killed or wounded. Besides Colonel Ferrier, Lieutenant-Colonel Davy, Captain Scott, Lieutenants Church, Houston, Newel, Stanley, and several others, whose names I forget, were killed; and Captains Minchin and Smith, Lieutenants Hubble, Matthew, Hand, Talbot, and others, were wounded. The remains of the corps passed before the Liberator with trailed arms at double-quick, and received with a cheer, but without halting, his words, 'Salvadores de mi patria!'—Saviours of my country.

"On getting across the bridge you see there, the enemy made an effort to retrieve the day, and opened fire with the guns still left to them. Our men then charged, took one of the guns, and got across the bridge, when they had to form square to repel some squadrons of cavalry that attacked them. Our well-directed fire soon broke them, and the rout now became general. The battalion 'Valence' alone maintained the order of its ranks all the way to Valencia, baffling for eighteen miles the unceasing attacks of our cavalry. Under the walls of Valencia itself it was, for the last time, charged by the rifles and the grenadiers of Bolivar's Guard, mounted on horseback by order of the Liberator. In this final conflict the gallant Spaniards continued unbroken, and were no further molested, but reaching at ten P.M. the foot of the mountains, they made good their retreat to Puerto Cabello to the number of nine hundred men.

"All the rest of the Spanish army was completely dissolved, and Carácas, the capital, La Guaira, and the other towns still in the hands of the royalists, at once surrendered. In short, the independence of Columbia was achieved by the battle of Carabobo; and that the victory was entirely owing to the English is proved by the fact that they lost six hundred men out of nine hundred, while all the rest of Bolivar's army, amounting to more than six thousand men, lost but two hundred!"

The old general here concluded his harangue. We then ascended the hill on which the Spanish guns were planted, examined the deep ravine through which the English had passed to the attack, and the slope on which the Spaniards had been drawn up, and returned to Valencia

impressed with the belief that the English soldier had never better maintained his reputation than at Carabobo.

THE WRECK OF THE POCAHONTAS.

I LIT the lamps in the lighthouse tower,
For the sun dropped down and the day was dead;
They shone like a glorious clustered flower,
Ten golden and five red.

Looking across, where the line of coast
Stretched darkly, shrinking away from the sea,
The lights sprang out at its edge, almost
They seemed to answer me!

O warning lights, burn bright and clear,
Hither the storm comes! Leagues away
It moans and thunders low and drear,—
Burn till the break of day!

Good night! I called to the gulls that sailed
Slow past me through the evening sky;
And my comrades, answering shrilly, hailed
Me back with boding cry.

A mournful breeze began to blow,
Weird music it drew through the iron bars,
The sullen billows boiled below,
And dimly peered the stars;

The sails that flocked the ocean floor
From east to west leaned low and fled;
They knew what came in the distant roar
That filled the air with dread!

Flung by a fitful gust, there beat
Against the window a dash of rain,—
Steady as tramp of marching feet
Strode on the hurricane.

It smote the waves for a moment still,
Level and deadly white for fear;
The bare rock shuddered,—an awful thrill
Shook even my tower of cheer.

Like all the demons loosed at last,
Whistling and shrieking, wild and wide,
The mad wind raged, and strong and fast
Rolled in the rising tide.

And soon in ponderous showers the spray,
Struck from the granite, reared and sprang,
And clutched at tower and cottage grey,
Where overwhelmed they clung

Half drowning, to the naked rock;
But still burned on the faithful light,
Nor faltered at the tempest's shock,
Through all the fearful night.

Was it in vain? That knew not we.
We seemed, in that confusion vast,
Of rushing wind and roaring sea,
One point whereon was cast

The whole Atlantic's weight of brine.
Heaven help the ship should drift our way!
No matter how the light might shine
Far on into the day.

When morning dawned, above the din
Of gale and breaker boomed a gun!
Another! We, who sat within,
Answered with cries each one.

Into each other's eyes with fear
We looked, through helpless tears, as still,
One after one, near and more near,
The signals pealed, until

The thick storm seemed to break apart,
To show us, staggering to her grave,
The fated brig. We had no heart
To look, for naught could save.

One glimpse of black hull heaving slow,
Then closed the mists o'er canvas torn
And tangled ropes, swept to and fro
From masts that raked forlorn.

Weeks after, yet ringed round with spray,
Our island lay, and none might land;
Though, blue, the waters of the bay
Stretched calm on either hand.

And when at last from the distant shore
A little boat stole out, to reach
Our loneliness, and bring once more
Fresh human thought and speech,

We told our tale, and the boatmen cried:
" 'Twas the Pocahontas—all were lost!
For miles along the coast, the tide
Her shattered timbers tost."

Then I looked the whole horizon round,—
So beautiful the ocean spread
About us, o'er those sailors drowned!
"Father in heaven," I said,

A child's grief struggling in my breast,
"Do purposeless thy creatures meet
Such bitter death? How was it best
These hearts should cease to beat?"

"Oh, wherefore! Are we nought to Thee?
Like senseless weeds that rise and fall
Upon thine awful sea, are we
No more then, after all?"

And I shut the beauty from my sight,
For I thought of the dead that lay below.
From the bright air faded the warmth and light,
There came a chill like snow.

Then I heard the far-off note resound,
Where the breakers slow and alumberous rolled,
And a subtle sense of Thought profound
Touched me with power untold.

And like a voice eternal spake,
That wondrous rhythm, and "Peace, be still,"
It murmured; "bow thy head, and take
Life's rapture and life's ill,

"And wait. At last all shall be clear."
The long, low, mellow music rose
And fell, and soothed my dreaming ear
With infinite repose.

Sighing, I climbed the lighthouse stair,
Half forgetting my grief and pain;
And while the day died, sweet and fair,
I lit the lamps again.

POISON OF THE RATTLESNAKE.

THE animal kingdom adds but two active poisons to the numberless fatal agents which form in bark and seed, or get new birth by annual dozens from the chemist's laboratory.

These two animal poisons are furnished by the race of venomous serpents and by the toad, whose ancient and evil reputation modern toxicology has finally justified by discovering in the mucus of his skin a deadly and rapid poison. The other animal substances which injure, we may pass over here, because the venom of the centipede or the scorpion is rarely fatal, and at all events is not to be compared to the potent material which the rattlesnake, cobra, or viper deals out to its victim.

The venom of the serpent is certainly one of the most powerful of all the poisons; and it therefore strikes us as strange, that, for devilish devices to kill, men have plundered vegetable and mine, but have left to the serpent untouched his death-giving juices. So far is this from the popular belief, that venom has been for ages supposed to form part of certain famous poisons, and within a few years it was thought to be the chief ingredient in the well-known arrow poison of South America. The symptoms of venom-torture are, however, distinct. It only injures when placed under the skin or deep in the tissues, and it is absolutely as harmless as bread when swallowed. To have been used by the poisoner it must, therefore, have been lodged in the tissues—a difficult task; and we should have then found related a certain set of symptoms which would be unmistakable as evidence of the character of the poison. No such histories exist; and the doubtful case of the Queen of Egypt is the only one where the venom of the serpent figures upon the pages of historic poisonings.

The savage has been equally unwilling or unable to employ venom; and the various poisons with which he arms his spear or dart—such as the upas of the East, and the various wooraras of South America and the Isthmus—are all found to be of vegetable origin, and to act differently from the poisons yielded by the snakes of the various countries in question.

It is to be presumed that the non-employment of a poison so fatal and so widely diffused has been due to the difficulty of securing it in quantity, and to the world-wide dread of serpents, rather than to any other cause. Such sentiments may have had something to do with the scientific neglect which so long left these poisons to be the subject of a hundred fabulous tales, while other and far less interesting poisons have been studied over and over with never-ending care and patience. Not, however, that this has been the only reason. Science is fearless, and carries untrembling her all-revealing

torch, with little regard to the fears and prejudices which check the steps of those who are not her followers and priests. But in Europe, where investigators are abundant, poisonous serpents are small and rare; whilst in lands where the snake exists in hideous plenty, the experimental toxicologist is rarely found, or lacks the means to carry on his pursuits. In Europe, also, the added interest which once belonged to the subject on account of the number of serpents has lessened with their gradual extinction; and, as man has not himself employed this poison, it has also wanted the fascination belonging to agents which, having once figured in some famous poisoning case, never again fail of interesting the chemist and toxicologist, who sets about at once to discover antidotes and detective tests for each rare poison, as in turn it makes good this horrible claim to be so considered. In this way the great Palmer case brought about the most careful study of both strychnia and tartar emetic; while the equally infamous Boccard poisoning in Belgium led to a thorough investigation of nicotine, which for the first time made its appearance upon the annals of crime.

Lacking this kind of interest, but surrounded by a haze of the strangest popular beliefs, the serpent venom got no fair examination until the researches of Francisco Redi, whose essay, originally in Italian, 1669, is now before me in Latin form, Amsterdam, 1675; a small volume of *Experimenta circa res diversas naturales, speciatim illas, quæ ex Indiis adferuntur*. On the title-page, a buxom figure of Science receives gifts from a plumed Indian with a crocodile comfortably bestowed under his arm. Charas, a better observer, wrote soon after Redi. His work, entitled *New Experiments upon Vipers*, with exquisite Remedies, etc., now rendered into English, London, 1673, set at rest many popular fallacies, and prepared the way for the more elaborate research made by the well-known Felix Fontana, and first published in Lucca in 1767. Of this remarkable toxicological study it is difficult to speak too highly. Resting upon at least three thousand experiments on all classes of animals, it displays an amount of industry and scientific sagacity which have been rarely equalled. A short chemical paper by Lucien Bonaparte, and scattered records of cases of poisoning, comprise nearly all that has been added to the subject, so far as concerns the viper. In the East Indies, Russell and Davy have since experimented with the venom of the cobra, and Dr. Rufz has given us an excellent account of the dreaded *vipère fer de lance* of Martinique, while in America the toxicology of the rattlesnake and copperhead have been studied of late with every advantage which the most modern methods could give. From these researches collectively we are able to offer a sketch of the toxicology of snake poisons which will at least approach in completeness that which can be given of any of the best-known and more accessible poisons.

The United States possess but three kinds of

poisonous serpents, known in popular language as rattlesnake, copperhead, and moccasin. The first of these having been the chief subject of study, we premise by stating that nearly all of our statements refer to this serpent. As a poisoner it ranks side by side with the cobra and vipère fer de lance, and probably above the copperhead and the moccasin. In fact, all that we know at present leads us to believe that the venom of all serpents is alike in toxic character, and only differs in degree of virulence and in amount; so that what we gather as to the chemical and other qualities of the venom of any one serpent may, as a rule, be said to apply alike to all of this terrible family.

The rattlesnake, as every one knows, gets his name from the curious jointed appendix to the tail by which the hunter becomes aware of his neighbourhood. We have seen one of these sets of rattles numbering eighteen joints, another thirty-six; which, if the vulgar notion be correct, would allot to the owner just so many years of life. We have known, however, three of these joints to form in forty summer days; so that it is probable the larger snakes might carry them by dozens, if they were not so brittle as constantly to be broken off and lost.

The attitude of a large rattlesnake when you come suddenly upon him is certainly one of the finest things to be seen in American forests. The vibrating tail projects from coils formed by about half the length of the snake, while the neck, lifted a few inches, is held in curves, the head perfectly steady, the eyes dull and leaden, the whole posture bold and defiant, and expressive of alertness and inborn courage.

Let us tease this gallant-looking reptile with a switch. He has power to throw his head forward only about one-third to one-half the length of his whole body, so that our game is safe enough. Sometimes he will strike at the stick; usually he reserves his forces, judging wisely as to his own powers. At last, when he finds that he is getting nothing by pluck and endurance, he turns his head, and, unrolling coil from coil, glides away, not very swiftly, ready at a moment to coil anew, as a regiment forms square to receive a charge. If, as he glides along, you can seize his tail, and quickly enough lift him from the earth, holding him at arm's length, he will be utterly unable to return on your hand or to reach your body, having none of the great physical force of his cousins, the constrictors. If, while on the ground, in any posture, coiled or not, you seize his tail, that deadly head will return upon you with a swiftness which seems as though you had touched some releasing spring in a piece of quick machinery; so that there is no truth in the notion that the snake can strike only when coiled. The awful celerity of this movement is in odd contrast to the sluggish pace of most of his actions, which are sadly deceptive, and have cost more than one man his life. Hundreds of times have we seen this swift motion, and as often marvelled at the simplicity and certainty of the means which drove the relentless, death-laden head to its

mark. Let us look a moment at the rest of the apparatus, and then we shall the easier understand how all the parts unite in functional activity so as to give to this horrible instrument the same efficiency which Nature has secured for her other and more seemingly useful purposes.

The laboratory in which the serpent makes his potent medicine is an almond-shaped gland behind the eye, on either side of the upper jaw. It looks like an ordinary salivary gland, and is merely a mass of minute tubes surrounded by little sacs or cells, only to be seen by a microscope. Here the venom forms, and thence reaches a larger tube at the lower side of the gland. This is the only poison-sac. It communicates with a tube or duct about the size of a steel knitting-needle, which runs forward under the eye, and then around the front of the upper jaw, where it has a slight enlargement made up of muscular fibres, so arranged as to keep the duct shut and to cork up the poison until a greater power overcomes the resistance. The anterior bone of the serpent's upper jaw is double—one for each side. It is an irregular truncated pyramid; apex down, and hollowed, so that in it rests the stout base of the fang. This exquisite instrument is merely a hollow tooth, curved backwards like the bend of a sabre, with a little forward turn at the tip, which is itself solid, for strength's sake, and as sharp as the finest needle. About a line below this point, on the front aspect, there is a minute opening. If we run into this a bristle, it will appear at the base of the tooth, just where the tube leading from the gland lies against the fang, and is held to it by the folds of tissue which lie in the gums. When unused, the two fangs, with their supporting bone, in which they are rigidly fixed, are drawn backwards, and lie, covered by a cloak of mucous tissue, one on each side upon the roof of the snake's mouth. A second muscle is so attached to the maxillary bone as to be able to erect it, together with the fang, which, when thus ready for use, projects downwards into the open mouth, its convexity forwards.

Thus placed, it is at the utmost disadvantage; and this is only in part overcome by the backward bending of the head and the extreme opening of the mouth at the moment of the bite. Lastly, let us understand that two powerful muscles fastened to the upper bones of the head run over the venom gland, and then are attached, one on each side, to the lower jaw. Let these muscles shorten and two things result—the jaws close on the body bitten, and, the gland being abruptly squeezed, the venom flies along the tube of exit, through the basal opening of the fang, and out at the orifice near its tip.

It will be easy now to understand how this wonderful machinery moves in sequence to its deadly result. You have come a little too near this coiled death. Instantly the curves of the projecting neck are straightened, half a ring of the coil flashes out with it, and the head is

thrust at the opposing flesh, the bulk of the body serving as an anchor. As it moves, the neck bends back, the mouth opens wide, the fangs are unsheathed and held stiffly, and you have a sharp pang as the points enter the skin. Quick as thought the lower jaw shuts on the part, deeper go the fangs, and, the same muscle which closes the jaw compressing the glands, the venom is injected among the tissues which the fangs have pierced. Of late the doctors have taken to administering medicines by a very similar process, which has been found to combine economy in the amount of medicine needed with the utmost efficiency as to results. This instrument is merely a hollow needle, through which the medicine is forced by a syringe. I wish I could say that the hint was taken from the snake, so much of a plea might have been put forward for his abused race.

It sometimes chances that, despite all this exquisite machinery, some little failure occurs, which may be taken as a desirable piece of good luck for the person aimed at. For instance, the teeth may strike at a disadvantage, and be suddenly doubled backwards, whereupon the venom occasionally goes down the snake's throat, and, as we shall see, does him no such harm as drugs usually do the apothecary; or it chanches that, the sequence of actions failing as to their due order, the venom is ejected before the fang enters, or escapes at the base of the tooth on account of the duct not being drawn neatly upon the aperture of the tooth.

Let these incidents occur, and at the same time let the sharp and hooked teeth of the lower jaw wound the skin, and we shall have all the material for a case of rattlesnake bite, in which we may administer an antidote with great surety of success. A snake strikes you, the skin is wounded, and the conclusion is naturally drawn that you are also poisoned; whereas both in man and animals, as we have seen many times, the victim may drag the snake some distance, hung to the tissues by the harmless little hooked teeth of the lower jaw.

It is also a matter of moment whether, being bitten, you have received two fang-wounds or only one, because the two glands are as independent of one another as two rival drug-shops; and, if you get both fangs in you, the dose of the venom is twice what it would be if only one of them entered. Luckily, it often chanches that, in small members like the fingers, one tooth goes aside of the mark, and so fails of its purpose, thus lessening the risk exactly one half.

These keenly tempered fangs are liable to be lost by accidents, and also to fall by natural decay. When the former occurs, the snake is unarmed for the time; but in a few days a reserve fang—which always lies behind or to one side of the active tooth—becomes firmly set in its socket, and comes into apposition with the opening of the duct. It is therefore not enough to pull out the active fang, since numerous others lie ready for use in the gum behind it. A young friend once showed me a small rattle-

snake, from which he had taken the active fangs three months before, supposing the reptile thus disarmed for life. He was accustomed to handle it freely, and had never been bitten. On opening the mouth, I pointed out to him the new and efficient teeth which had taken the place of those he had removed. How much danger he thus ran it were hard to say, since the snake may be handled with impunity, if care be taken not to hurt it or to use abrupt motions.

A very startling incident illustrative of this occurred some years ago in Philadelphia. A tavern-keeper had in a box two large rattlesnakes, perfectly wild, and not long captives. Coming into his bar-room early one morning, he found his little daughter, about six years old, seated beside the open snake-box, with both serpents lying in her lap. He was wise enough, seeing her unhurt, to ask how they got out, and hearing, in reply, that she herself had lifted them from the box, he ordered her to replace them, which she did without harm, finally closing upon them the lid of their cage. Snakes long confined very often become so tame that, as we have found, they will allow mice, reed-birds, or pigeons in their cage without attempting to injure them. If any still doubt that the rattlesnake may be handled with impunity, the experience of the naturalist Water-ton may end his doubt. His biographer describes him as seizing and holding poisonous serpents with an indifference which is only credible to those who have studied their habits with care. We are persuaded, however, that certain snakes are more likely to strike than others, some requiring the utmost provocation. This is very apt to be the case after the serpent has bitten a few times vainly upon a stick or other hard body; so that it seems probable, not only that the snake has memory, but that individuality may exist in forms of life even as low as this one. Where in the descending scale does this cease? Are there clever earthworms and stupid earthworms—no two things anywhere precisely the same?

Let us now pursue our inquiry, see how we may get the venom for study, and what physically and chemically this marvellous liquid may be.

Many ways of handling the serpent were tried before one was found simple and safe enough. While the complicated methods were used some narrow escapes were made, until at last we hit on a plan which answered every purpose. A stick five feet long, cut square at the end, was fitted with a thin leather strap two inches wide, tacked on to one side of the end, and then carried over it and through a staple on the other side, where it was attached to a stout cord. Pulling this leather out into a loop, and leaning over the snake-cage, which is five feet deep and now open above, we try to noose one of the snakes. This has been done so often as to be difficult. At first, when it was slipped over their heads, they crawled forward through it; now always they have learned

to draw back on its approach. At last one is taken, the leathern strap is drawn tight around his neck by pulling the cord, and is kept so near to the head that he cannot turn to bite the stick, if the pressure should provoke his wrath. Thus secured, we lift him from his dozen of friends, and, holding the noose firm, so as to keep him well squeezed against the end of the stick, we put him on a table. Next, resigning the staff and string to an assistant, we open the snake's mouth, and, with the edge of a little saucer, catch and elevate the two fangs. This is an old snake, milked often before, and now declining to bite unless compelled. Holding the saucer in one hand we seize the snake's head over the venom gland, and, with a thumb and forefinger, press the venom forward through the duct. Suddenly a clear yellow fluid flows out of the fangs. This is the venom. The snake is four feet long, untouched for two weeks, and has given us about twenty drops of poison. The assistant replaces him in his cage, and we turn to look at the famous poison which a living animal carries unharmed in his tissues for the deadly hurting of whom it may concern. There is some of this fluid in a phial on the table before me, and here some of it dried for three years—a scaly, yellow, shining matter, like dried white of egg, and as good to kill as ever it was. No smell, if fresh; no taste; faintly acid, and chemically a substance which is so nearly like this very white of egg that no chemical difference may be made between them. Two things so alike and so unlike! Indeed, it seems hardly fair of Nature to set us such problems. We fall back upon an imagined difference in the molecular composition of the two—very consoling, no doubt; but, after all, the thing is bewildering, explain it as we may. We would like not to believe it. We think of poisons as unlike what they hurt. Let us take from a dog's veins a little blood, keep it a few hours in the open air, and throw it back into his circulation, and very surely you have given him his death. Ugly facts of disease, where the body gets up its own poisons for home use, make the wonder less to the doctor; but even now to him it must still seem wonderful, this little bit of white of egg to nourish, and this, to no human test differing in composition, good for destroying alone.

It was once thought that the poison ceased to be such when not injected by the maker. Fontana disproved this, and so we may safely use it in our researches as we get it from the snake, with the great advantage of knowing what dose we administer. Let us now study the symptoms which this poison produces, and then learn, if possible, how it acts, and on what organs; because, as modern science has shown, all poisons have their especial organs, or sets of organs, upon which chiefly their destructive influence falls. This sort of analytic separation of the effects of poisons is always difficult, and never more so than as regards venom.

Rattlesnake poison is not fatal to all life. You cannot kill a crotalus with its own venom,

nor with that of another. Neither can you poison a plant with venom. And, in fact, if you manage the experiment cleverly, canary-seed may be made to sprout from a mixture of venom and water.

We have seen, too, that the serpent often swallows his own poison. As for him, if it will not hurt being put under his skin, the wonder of its not injuring him when swallowed is little enough. It only excites amazement when we learn that it poisons no creature if ingested.

We have fed pigeons with it, day after day, in doses each enough to have killed forty had it been put within the tissues. Placed in the stomach, it lies within some thousandths of an inch of the blood-vessels, only a thinnest mucous membrane between; and here it is harmless, and there it means death. Let us follow this problem, as has lately been done. Why does it not poison? We give a pigeon fifty drops of venom, which, otherwise used, would kill a hundred, and that surely. For three days we collect all the excreta, and then, killing the bird, remove with care the contents of the intestinal canal. Knowing well what fluids dissolve the venom, we separate by this means whatever poison may be present from all the rest of the substances passed by or taken from the bird. Then, with the fluid thus obtained, we inject the tissues of pigeons. No injury follows; our poison has gone. But where, and how? Let us mix a little of it with gastric juice, and keep it at body-heat for an hour. It still poisons; but we learn at length, after many essays, that very long digesting of it in constantly added quantities of gastric juice does change it somewhat; and so, as we do not find it in the excreta, we come to think that, being what we call an albuminoid, it is very likely to be altered during digestion, and so rendered innocent enough, it may be. Here, at last, we must rest, having learned, first, that venom will not pass through the mucous surfaces; and, second, that it undergoes such change in digestion as to make it harmless. In these peculiarities it stands alone, if we except certain putrefying substances which may usually be swallowed without injury, but slowly kill if placed under the skin.

As regards also the mode in which venom is hurtful to animal life, this potent agent is altogether peculiar. Let us examine a single case. We inject through a hollow needle two drops of venom under the skin of a pigeon. On a sudden, within a minute, it is dead, without pang or struggle; and the tissues, when examined, reveal no cause of death. The fatal result is rarely so speedy; but here, as with all poisons, personal peculiarities count for a good deal, and one animal will die in a minute from a dose which another may resist for hours. We repeat the experiment, using only half a drop. In a few minutes the bird staggers, and at last crouches, too feeble to walk. The feebleness increases, vomiting occurs, the breathing becomes laboured, the head falls, a slight convulsion follows, and the pigeon is dead. This is all we see—merely a strange intense weakness.

Before trying to explain it, we shall do well to watch that which takes place when a larger animal, surviving the first effects, perishes after a few hours or days. Here is a record of such a case. A large dog, poisoned with five drops of venom, lives over the first few hours of feebleness, and then begins to show a new set of symptoms. Some horrible malady of the blood and tissues has come upon him, so that the vital fluid leaks from the kidneys or the bowels, and oozes from the gums. The fang-wounds bleed, and a prick of a needle will drip blood for hours. Thus exhausted, he dies, or slowly recovers. Meanwhile, the wound made by the injecting needle or the fang has undergone a series of changes, which, rightly studied, gave the first clue to the true explanation of how this hideous agent acts.

A large and growing tumour marks where the needle entered. We cut into it. There is no inflammation at first; the whole mass is fluid blood, which by and by soaks every tissue in the neighbourhood, and even stains the bones themselves. If, for the sake of contrast, we wound any healthy part with a common needle, without venom, we open thus a few small blood-vessels, which presently cease to bleed, because the escaped blood quickly clots, and so corks their open mouths by a rarely failing providence of all-thoughtful Nature. The conclusion seems easy, that the venom destroys the power of the blood to clot, and so deprives the animal of this exquisite protection against hæmorrhage. If the creature live long and the dose be heavy, the collected blood putrefies, abscesses form, and more or less of the tissue becomes gangrenous. Nor is this evil only local. The venom absorbed from the wound enters the circulation, and soon the whole mass of the blood has lost power to clot when drawn. We are not willing to assert that this is a putrefactive change; but it is certainly in that direction, because this blood, if drawn, will now decay faster than other blood. By and by it begins to leak through the various tissues, and we find blood escaped out of the vessels and into the brain, lungs, or intestinal walls, giving in each case specific symptoms, according to the part injured and the function disturbed.

A further step has of late been gained towards comprehending this intricate problem. A young rabbit was made senseless and motionless with chloroform. Then its abdomen was opened, and a piece of the delicate membrane which holds the intestines was laid under the microscope, and kept moist by an assistant. The observer's eye looked down upon a wild racing of myriad blood-discs through the tiny vessels of the transparent membrane. Presently the assistant puts a drop of venom upon the tissue we are studying. For thirty seconds there is no change. Then suddenly a small vessel, giving way, is hidden by a rush of blood-discs. A little way off another vessel breaks, then a third, and a fourth, until within five minutes the field of view is obscured by blood, which at last causes a rupture in the delicate membrane

between whose double folds the vessels run to and from the intestine. We are now as near to the centre of the maze as we are likely to come: nearer than we have come with most poisons. We have learned that this bland, tasteless venom has the subtle power to forbid the blood to clot, and in some strange way to pass through the tissues, and to soften and destroy the little blood-vessels, so that they break under the continuing force of the heart-pump.

The same phenomena may be seen on the surface of an open wound treated with venom; and that which happens in the wound, and, in the experiment just described, goes on at last everywhere in the body, so that in dozens of places vessels break down, while the blood is powerless to check its own wasteful outflow, as it would have done in health.

We have dwelt so long upon the symptoms of the protracted cases of snake-bite as to have lost sight for a time of the smaller class of sufferers, who perish so suddenly as to forbid us to explain their deaths by the facts which seem so well to cover the chronic cases. These speedily fatal results are uncommon in man, but in small animals are very frequent.

It is common to see pigeons die within ten minutes, and in these instances no trace of alteration can be found in the blood or solid tissues. Upon considering, therefore, the two sets of cases, it seems pretty clear that the venom has, besides its ability to alter the blood and enfeeble the vessels, some direct power to injure the great nerve-centres which preside over locomotion, respiration, and the heart's action.

To describe the experimental method by which these conclusions were reached would demand the space of another article, and involve a full explanation of the modern means of studying the effects of poisons; so that for this reason we must beg the reader to accept the proposition without being troubled with the proof.

It were well if the record of horrors ended with the death or the recovery; but in countries where poisonous snakes are abundant and cases of bite numerous, it is not uncommon to find that persons who survive become the victims of blindness, skin disorders, and various forms of palsy.

Fortunately the average snake-bite, even in India or Martinique, is far less fatal than was once believed; so that even dogs, when bitten, are by no means sure to die. Thus, of nine so treated on one occasion, only three perished; while among the eighty cases of venom poisoning in man recorded in American medical journals up to 1861 we have but four deaths. This unlooked-for result is due chiefly to the fact, that the danger is directly as the amount of venom, and that the serpent, unless very large and long at rest, or in captivity, can rarely command enough to kill a man. Once aware of these facts, it is easy to see why so many remedies got credit as antidotes in a disease supposed to be fatal, and in reality not at all so.

Among the most absurd of the tales which rest on the common belief that a mere prick of a venomed fang may kill, is that of the farmer who was stung by a snake, which not only slew him, but left its fang in the fatal boots, which, falling to his descendants, proved fatal to two of them also. This story is to be traced to its original in the "Letters of an American Farmer," by St. John (de Crèvecoeur), where it loses none of the piquancy of the later versions.

The reader will by this time understand that it is impossible the mere wound of the dry fang could destroy three persons in succession, so that we may confidently dismiss this tale to the limbo of other snake stories.

A few words must suffice to tell all we know as to the proper treatment. There are in America at least a hundred supposed antidotes, and in Martinique about as many. It is an old saying of a wise doctor, that diseases, for which there are numerous remedies, are either very mild or very fatal. Taking the mass of cases of snake-bite in America, few die; and this is why, as we said before, all means seem good alike. Tested fairly, where the dose of venom has been large, they are all alike worthless—a beautiful subject for the medical statistician.

Looked at with an eye to symptoms, we see in the first effects of venom a dangerous depression of all functions, exactly like what follows an over-dose of tartar emetic. The obvious treatment is to stimulate the man, and this is the meaning of whisky for snake-bite—a remedy, by the way, which enormously increased the number of snake-bites in the army on the American frontier. The intensity of the depression is shown best by the amount of whisky which may then be taken with impunity. In one case, a well-known physician of Tamaqua, Pennsylvania, gave to a child aged two years a pint of whisky in two hours. A little girl of nine years old in South Carolina received thus a pint and a half of whisky in four hours. Neither patient was made drunk by these doses, and both recovered.

It is likely that too much whisky is often given in such cases, since all that is desirable is to keep the person generally stimulated, and not to make him drunk. Nor does stimulus destroy the venom—it only antagonises its activity, as is best shown by mixing venom with alcohol, and then injecting the mixture under the skin, when the subject of the experiment will die, just as if no alcohol had been used.

As to local treatment, whatever gets the venom out of the tissues is good. Cross-cut the wound through the fang-marks, and suck at it with cups or with the mouth, if you like the bitten person well enough. Cut the piece out, if the situation allows of that, or burn it with a red-hot iron—milder caustics being mostly valueless. One other measure has real utility. Tie a broad band around the limb above the bite, so as to stop the pulse. Now give whisky enough to strengthen the heart. Let us then relax the band, and so connect again

the circulation of the bitten part with the general system. The poison, before in quarantine, is let loose; the pulse becomes fast and feeble. We tighten the band, and give more liquor. The principle is this: You have ten men to fight, and you open the door wide enough just to let in one at a time. So much of the venom as your local treatment leaves in the tissues has to be admitted to the general system soon or late; we so arrange as to let it in a little at a time, and are thus able to fight it in detail.

Stripped utterly of its popular surroundings, and told in the plainest language, the mere scientific story of the venom of the rattlesnake is full of a horrible fascination, such as to some degree envelops the history of all poisons. One would like to know who first among the early settlers encountered the reptile, and what that emigrant thought of the original inhabitant. What they wrote of him soon after is told in the following quotations, with which we shall close. They have a peculiar interest, as the first printed statements about the rattlesnake, and as giving the earliest expression to certain fallacies which still retain their hold upon the popular mind.

From New English Canaan, or New Canaan. Written by Thomas Morton, of Clifford's-Inn, Gent. Printed at Amsterdam, 1637.

"There is one creeping beast or longe creeple (as the name is in Devonshire) that hath a rattle at his tayle, that does discover his age; for so many yeares as hee hath lived, so many joynts are in that rattle, which soundeth (when it is in motion) like pease in a bladder, & this beast is called a rattle-snake; but the Salvages give him the name of Sesick; which some take to be the Adder; & it may well be so (for the Salvages are significant in their denomination of anything) & is no lesse hurtful than the Adder of England & no more. I have had my dogge venomed with troubling one of these, & so swelled that I had thought it would have bin his death; but with one saucer full of salet oyle poured downe his throate he recovered, & the swelling assuaged by the next day. The like experiment hath bin made upon a boy, that hath by chaunce trod upon one of these, & the boy never the worse. Therefore it is simplicitie in any one that shall tell a bugbeare tale of horror, or terrible serpents that are in that land." (p.82.)

From New England's Prospect. By William Wood. London, 1636.

"That which is most injurious to the person & life of man is a Rattlesnake, which is generally a yard & a halfe long, as thick in the middle as the small of a man's legge; she hath a yellow belly, her backe being spotted with blacke, russet yellow, & greene colours placed like scales; at her taile is a rattle with which shee makes a noyse when shee is molested, or when shee seeth any approach neere her; her neck seemes to be no thicker than a man's thumbe, yet can she swallow a Squerrill, having a great wide mouth, with teeth as sharpe as needles, wherewith shee biteth such as tread upon her; her poyson lyeth in her teeth, for she hath no sting. When any man is bitten by any one of these creatures, the poyson spreads so suddenly through the veins, & so runs to the heart, that in one hour it causeth death, unlesse he hath the Antidote to ex-

pell the poyson, which is a root called Snakeweede, which must be champed, the spittle swallowed & the roote applied to the sore; this is present cure against that which would be present death without it; this weede is ranke poyson, if it be taken by any man that is not bitten, unless it be physically compounded; whosoever is bitten by these snakes his flesh becomes spotted like a leaper untill he be perfectly cured. It is reported that if the party live that is bitten, the snake will dye, & if the party dye the snake will live. This is the most poysonous and dangerous creature, yet nothing so bad as the report goes of him in England. For whereas hee is said to kill a man with his breath, & that hee can flie, there is no such matter, for he is naturally the most sleepe & unnimble creature that lives, never offering to leape or bite any man if he be not trodden on first: & it is their desire in hot weather to lie in pathes, where the sun may shine on them, where they will sleepe so soundly that I have known foure men stride over one of them & never awake her: five or six men have been bitten by them, which by using snakeweede were all cured, never yet any losing his life by them. Cowes have been bitten, but being cut in divers places & this weede thrust into their flesh were cured. I never heard of any beast that was yet lost by any of them, saving one mare." (p. 38.)

From New England's Rarities. Discovered by John Josselyn, Gent. London, 1672.

"The Rattle Snake who poysons with a vapour that comes through two crooked fanges in their mouths; the hollows of these fanges are black as ink. The Indians when weary with travelling, will take them up with their bare hands, laying hold with one hand behind their head, and with the other taking hold of their tail, & with their teeth tear off the skin of their backs & feed upon them alive, which they say refresheth them." Ugh!! (p. 38.)

We are aware of no earlier accounts; so that, in the scope of this article, the reader has the first and the very last words concerning the serpent in question.

SENT TO THE TOWER.

NEITHER for my stubborn patriotism, like Owen Glendower; nor for my faithfulness to my sovereign, like Sir Simon Burley; nor through my weakness of character, like Richard the Second; nor because of the jealousy of ambitious relatives, like the Henrys and Edwards; nor on a charge of witchcraft, like Lord Hastings; nor for aspiring to marry above me, like Arundell of Norfolk; nor for my religious zeal, like Sir Thomas More, Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, Anne Askew, and the seven bishops; nor for my royal blood, like the venerable Countess of Salisbury; nor for my ambition, like the Dudleys; nor as a victim to court intrigues, like Raleigh, Cromwell, and Essex; nor for my treason, like Balmerino and Lovat; nor for defying the Speaker's warrant, like Sir Francis Burdett—have I been sent to the Tower. A sense of shame, combined with ignorance, pure and unadulterated, has brought me here, and I place myself in the custody of a warder with a complete sense of humility and sub-

mission. "Whilst contemplating the Tower of London," my guide-book tells me, "the mind spontaneously reverts to the Norman Conquest." What has been the matter with *my* mind, that, instead of "spontaneously reverting," as it ought to have done, I have lived all these years in London without visiting its famous fortress? I once penetrated secret chambers in Nantes armouries, and discovered an inscription, "*Arthur and Thomas Jackson of Bristol, prisoners of War 1703*," as my reward; I have journeyed to Champ-tocé for the express purpose of gazing on the ruined castle of that Sieur de Retz, who is said to have been the original Blue Beard; and have visited modern dungeons and ancient donjons, castles, galleries, and fortresses in most of the countries in Europe. But the show-places of my own city are unknown to me. I have never been up the Monument, nor through Westminster Abbey. My knowledge of St. Paul's is limited to distant views of its dome, and nearer views of its railings. The Thames Tunnel is a picture, a magic-lantern slide, the top of my old nurse's workbox, a stopping pier for Greenwich steamboats, a gaudy paper-weight; but it is not a reality for me. I could not tell you the way to the Mint; and I saw the state apartments at Windsor Castle for the first time on Tuesday week. In short, after living in London more years than I care to say, its sights are as strange to me as those of Paris and Vienna, of Munich and Florence, of Rome and Milan, are familiar. Taking myself seriously to task, I determine to devote time to the sights of London, and at once find myself at sea. On asking to be taken up to the ball of St. Paul's I find divine service going on, and the beadle scandalised at my request. Walking on to Monument-yard, the janitor points silently to a painted board, which says "no one admitted while the Monument is under repair," and looks as if he thought me a barbarian for troubling him under the circumstances. It is now dusk, and I defer my visit to the Tower until next day. Excited and eager, I rise early, perform a journey by railway and by steamer, and present myself at the gates at nine, to find that the warders do not begin duty till half-past ten, and that the first "show-round" will not be for one hour and fifteen minutes later. So much for a Londoner's ignorance of London. A country cousin, or an intelligent Zulu visitor, would have managed better; and having made pilgrimages to the city in vain on two separate days, I take a penny steamboat ticket at Westminster on a third, with my confidence considerably shaken in my own knowledge of town.

My first thoughts on board are, why have I neglected this mode of conveyance so long, and why are not the steamers fuller of the class who ride in hansoms, and to whom personal economy is not an object in life? Within given points, your steamboat is a swifter as well as a cheaper means of gaining your destination, but I see few people on board to whom the saving of time is likely to be of consequence. Yet any one going, we will say from the Houses of Parliament to

London Bridge, would save many minutes if he went by water instead of driving, and there seems to be a link wanting between the express steamers and the carriage-driving and cab-riding public. The literature and the refreshment sold on board confirm my views. The illustrated and facetious broad-sheet belongs to a bygone time, and speaks to even a lower order of intelligence than our penny comic periodicals appeal to now. The pictorial Police News, with fancy woodcuts of the latest murderer disembowelling his victim, and of the latest murderer but one swinging on the gallows (the evil man's moustache and features being quite visible through the white cap), is not an intellectual form of literary solace; and though the boy shouts astutely "with portraits of the gallows for the last time, through 'angings goin' to be done in private," he meets with as little encouragement as the vendor of oranges and almond paste. The young men and boys on board, who remind one somehow of a third-rate theatre, have an air of truant playing, and such of them as have parcels put them under the seats to place hands in pockets and patrol the deck unconcernedly. Looking about among the passengers, we also notice clerks, old and young, aged nondescripts, whose garments bear the traces of many years' conflict with a greasy and cloth-staining world, and a few idlers who gaze critically on the Thames Embankment, and call it "a tidy bit of work," as if it were a composition in Berlin wool, and remind each other how long they "said it would be about, when it was fust begun." But no one on board seems of sufficient importance to himself and to the world to make his time valuable, and we land at All Hallows' pier, with a troubled conviction that we have not made out why the classes who are at once busy and prosperous do not avail themselves of the steamers of the Thames.

Through cavernous passages which, though open at the top, are dungeon-like in their blank high walls; past the quaint old tavern, where "warm" sea-faring men and hard traders take their half-pints of heady port from the wood, with "morsels"—say a six-inch cube—of cheese at eleven in the day; past, too, its antithesis, the large-windowed café of the Italian confectioner who sells hot macaroni, sweetmeats, cheap wine, and light dishes of eggs, and grease, and salad, and who seems to have transported his establishment bodily from one of the quays of Genoa or Leghorn to Thames-street, E.C.; we arrive at our destination and find the Tower straight ahead of us, but hidden by bulging warehouses, and bales, and cranes. The shops around have the distinctive marks of the district, and the trade taste and decoration savour strongly of realism. Thus, every fish-dealer seems to sell cod-liver oil, and rows upon rows of bottles of bright golden liquid fringe and border the bodies of the huge cod themselves. Unpleasant looking toads, lizards, and puny crocodiles swing in bottles from one warehouse door; and a poetical publi-

can, who declines to rival his dry-goods neighbour by selling tea, winds up a distich to that effect, with—

Nor deal in goods sold by my grocer-brother,
But live in harmony with one another.

Going round by Tower Dock, the dryness of which is relieved by a couple of taverns in near contiguity, we see precisely the same string of listless ragged figures we left here yesterday. Forlorn, weary, wretched, they seem to have neither washed nor slept nor moved since that time. "Labourers-on-the-look-out-for-a-job, would-you-give-a-poor-man-out-o'-work-the-price-of-a-crust-of-bread-master?" (all in one word) is the answer of the nearest of them to our question as to why they are there and for what they are waiting. We incautiously give the poor man out of luck the price of a crust of bread, and at once find ourselves a centre of attraction to an unsavoury crowd. Faces so seamy, unkempt, unshorn, and fierce, that it is difficult to think of them as ever having been babies, or ought else unrepulsive and human, cluster round and plead roughly for help. "There has been no work to get latterly, times are so bad and hard, and won't we give 'em what we've given the other man, who hasn't a family, so help them, he hasn't, and had a job, too, the day before yesterday." Not a pleasant introduction to sight-seeing, this hoard of hungry desperate men; and distributing some small money, we pass through a sentry-guarded gate to the right, and stand face to face with a little knot of town beef-eaters with a considerable sense of relief.

"Beefeaters," if you like to call us so, of course," said the fine old veteran we struck up a friendship with upon the instant; "and beef-eaters I believe we're mostly known as among the commoner sort o' people. But 'Warders of the Tower,' drawing himself up an inch or two, "is our proper title, and our uniform is the same as the Yeomen of the Guard at St. James's, who walk next before the Queen when she opens parliament in state and has her eight cream-coloured horses out. Not this thing; this is only our working everyday dress, but a coat of all scarlet covered with gold, very handsome and expensive. We're all old soldiers who've never bin tried by court-martial. I was sergeant in the 9th Lancers myself, and well remember Sir Hope Grant joining us in Glasgow, when he was a mere boy, in 1826. Got on wonderfully since then, hasn't he, sir? So young, you see, to be in his position; but he were always a kind, good man to the soldiers, and every one of 'em was glad when he was promoted up and up as he has been. The great Duke of Wellington appointed me here four-and-twenty years ago, when he was Constable of the Tower, and it is a comfortable little thing enough, added to one's pension, though it wouldn't do without that. No, sir, we don't all have apartments found us. There's a certain amount of accommodation for the warders, and as one set of rooms gets vacant

the next man in seniority takes them. Formerly it used to be that when a man died who had rooms, the one appointed to fill his vacancy stepped into them in his place; but that's altered now, and very properly, and the warders who've been longest here get them in their turn. When shall we be going round? In exactly six minutes from now. You see, we arrange it this way: there's forty-four warders, and we take it in turn to show visitors about. Every quarter of an hour, from half-past ten to four a party starts from this refreshment-room, and goes right through the armouries and to the regalia-room. But if, mind you, twelve people are ready before the quarter's up, we just start with them without waiting. You'll get two tickets at sixpence each, and that's all the expense you'll be at. Never bin here before, sir? Well, that's wonderful that is. A stranger to London, sir? No! and never seen the Tower! Well, don't you bother yourself with that guide-book while I'm with you. I'll show you everything worth seeing, take my word, so you keep the book to amuse yourself when you get home." Out of the gorgeous scarlet and gold upon the surpassing beauty of which my old friend evidently loved to linger, and in their work-a-day attire, the warders look like something between a modern fireman and Gog and Magog. A black velvet biscuit-box, or a stiff inverted reticule adorned with the ribbons of the recruiting-sergeant disfigures their heads ("time of Henry the Seventh—this hat is a part of our regular uniform"), while the green cloth tunic, patched with red and ornamented on the chest by a crimson lion of acrobatic demeanour and pursuits, and the dingy purple macintosh cape which surmounted it are far more suggestive of modern masquerading than ancient costume.

If our party of sight-seers had been bound to deliver a verdict upon what our good old warder showed us in his round, I venture to think we should have evolved something startling and unusual. There was a deaf man, with a shrewish wife, who repeated every description as if it were a taunt, and darted arrowy little sayings into her husband's ear with a precision which showed the fine old English custom of torture had not gone out with the thumb-screw. There were three sailors who either did not speak English or disdained to avail themselves of a language which was shared by the four private soldiers who accompanied us; and there were some ladies of mature age who convoyed two children—emphasising our warder's sonorous words by ingenious twistings of their victims' necks and by nudges in their backs. Lastly, there was your servant, the avidity of whose thirst for knowledge compelled him to silence, that he might hear the more. I have no doubt we all enjoyed it immensely, but a less demonstrative dozen it would have been difficult to find. The policemen practising cutlass-drill in the dried-up moat awakened as much expression of interest as the Traitor's Gate; and the pencilled name of a vulgarity of yesterday was grinned over with

more palpable sympathy than the autograph of Dudley. The armoury, containing the mounted knights, "with their armour and horses exactly as they were in life," gave much quiet delight, which, in my case, was not lessened by the discovery that Edward the Fourth carried a striped barber's pole as a lance, that the Duke of Wellington's celebrated horse, Copenhagen, was of a dull crimson hue, and that several of the other steeds pranced and curveted under their riders in a highly groomed condition from black lead. If it be not irreverent to hint at "ginger" in connexion with these fiery animals, it really expresses their condition. All are of wood, and of an abnormal friskiness, which has been caught and fixed. Thus, one spirited animal champs his bit, so as to show quite an array of front teeth, and grins in ghastly fashion under the weight of his rider's armour. Another paws the ground impatiently and stands with one foot in the air, like some highly trained circus-steed suddenly impressed with the realities of life; while a third is skittishly ambling, as if meditating a bolt through the stained glass window and intervening wall into the Thames. Each horse has a different and distinct attitude of its own, and this row of rigid painted animals, all immovable and all imitating motion, has an effect which is partly humorous and partly ghostly. Six centuries have gone by since the owner of the first suit drew his sword, as his effigy is represented to be doing now; but the armour does not seem to have missed him much, and remains unmoved while our friend the warder points out its deficiencies and advantages as compared with the next suit. Past tilting lances, vam-plates, war-saddles, spiked chanfrons, ear-guards, cuirasses, helmets, breast-plates, and leg-armour, all on effigies, and all reminding one rather unpleasantly of death in life—and we are facing the old mask formerly worn by the headsman, and the false face and grotesque ears of Henry the Eighth's fool.

We are here between two fires, for the door by which we entered has just admitted another party of twelve, headed by a warder, and from the stairs above me a third party is having the Tower treasures explained. The result is that the descriptions mingle, and "George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, in a full soot o' plate, a wheel-lock petronel in his hands, and a spanner or instrument to wind up the spring," blends strangely with "Two kettles taken at Blenheim in the year 1704," and "Suit belonging to Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk—a tidy-sized sort o' man to sit upon a horse." All is given in the conventional showman voice, full of sonorous monotony, and as at one time we are three separate parties in one room, the confusion of description is rather startling. "Knights used to faint under their armour, and could not rise," and, "Sword of the celebrated Tippoo Sahib, captured at Seringapatam," sounded like portions of the same sentence, and we don't get rid of this anomaly until we are in Queen Elizabeth's armoury in the White Tower, and gazing on her effigy mounted on a carved white horse

of surpassing rigidity. We all take great interest in the weapons here. The "morning star" and "the holy water sprinkle," or the balls of wood armed with spikes and hanging loosely from a pole, which were in use from the Conquest to Henry the Eighth's time, give us infinite delight. The deaf man is made to prod himself descriptively, and his interpreter explains that she thinks he'll understand *that*: the children are asked patronisingly whether they'd like to feel such a morning star on *their* heads, as if the superiority of the people talking made them indifferent to physical pain. We spend quite five minutes in this armoury, and leave it with a confused sense that we have been fierce soldiers at some previous stage of our existence, and that we have carried halberds and pounded our enemies with the military flail; afterwards losing our heads on the block upon which Kilmarnock and Lovat suffered. The narrow prison of Sir Walter Raleigh, with its thick and gloomy walls, and the cell in which he slept; the ancient chapel of St. Peter, containing the dust of Lady Jane Grey; and the vast armouries filled with recently converted breechloaders, and swords and bayonets tastefully arranged, all come in rotation. We follow one another up and down turret-stairs, across courtyards, and into chambers, like so many sheep, asking few questions, and with a certain distrust, as if each were afraid of exposing his ignorance to his neighbour. The warder treats us like children with an uncontrollable propensity to do the wrong thing at the wrong time. "Now, then, step a little forward, and take a good look upward now, and round about you, if you be so minded; but on no account don't touch anything, because that's strictly forbidden. There's a pretty design for you now—a passion-flower that is, and made up entirely of pistols and sword-blades. That one overhead is taken from the top of the Prince of Wales's wedding-cake, and is made up of three thousand pieces—pistols, bayonets, and sword-blades. Then there's sun-flowers, and yonder's the rising sun and some serpents, all made out of arms, and as pretty designs as you might wish to see." These substantial efforts of fancy are interspersed throughout a room holding sixty-five thousand stand of arms, and are really not unlike what they purported to be. They vie with the regalia in arousing interest, and utterly outshine the historical portions of the Tower. Indeed, it was difficult to ascertain from the demeanour of my fellow sight-seers whether they knew anything concerning these, except what they learnt then and there from the warder. "Does the Queen ever live here now?" and "Wasn't there some prisoners to be seen as well?" did not convey a high idea of the knowledge of the visitors, and, from the manner of our guide's reply, we judged such questions to be common to his experience.

But the regalia rouses everybody into sighs and grunts of admiration. Passing through an ante-room, we are face to face with the British crown, and with a variety of baubles

which are gaudy and commonplace enough, save for their intrinsic value and associations. Then a female custodian comes forward to explain. She puts us in position round the glass and iron cage, and repeats her little lesson with the liveliness of a funeral dirge. From the "crown worn by her present Majesty, with heart-shaped ruby in the centre" to the "staff of Edward the Confessor, four feet long, and of pure gold," and the "swords of Justice and Mercy, that of Mercy having a blunt edge," her manner never altered, and we rejoined the jolly warder outside, convinced that contemplating other people's jewels, even when regal, all day and every day has in it something crushing to the soul. From the regalia we pass to Beauchamp Tower, across a damp yard, where the site of the old beheading block, and some three square yards of grimy turf are railed off as the "Tower Green," on which Anne Boleyn and others were beheaded. The warder carefully remains at the foot of the stairs while we rush up to gaze ignorantly at inscriptions, and, if we choose, to purchase a special handbook with the inscribers' names. This is the last thing shown, and it elicited the most animated comment I heard: "Why the doose don't they light up the stoopid old place with gas, instead o' makin' one stumble up stone stairs with no more light in 'em than my coal cellar at home?"

We are at Traitors' Gate again, as our guide reminds us, in exactly one hour and five minutes from the time when we left it. If we ever return to the Tower, we should prefer to re-visit it without companions, save of our own choosing, and to plod slowly through its dungeons and chambers with no other assistance than the history of our country affords.

THE DRAMATIC CARDINAL.

THAT the great Cardinal de Richelieu took so lively an interest in the drama that he may almost be looked upon as the father of French tragedy, is a fact pretty generally known; also that he tried his hand as a dramatic author, and produced plays, the weakness of which contrasted remarkably with the strength of his political operations. With his habitually nice discrimination of the minute details of character that are proper to every one of the illustrious personages of history whom, by the magic of his pen, he recalls to life, Lord Lytton, in his admirable play, has set down among the causes that induced the cardinal to eye with favour the somewhat suspicious De Mauprat, the circumstance that the latter was one of the chosen few who applauded the tragedy written by the former, and the allusion to his eminence's weak point is always thoroughly appreciated by the audience. But that many persons are aware of the important figure made by the cardinal in the early history of the French stage we very much doubt. Nevertheless there is a certain period in the chroni-

cles of the Parisian drama, during which Richelieu is as ubiquitous as Figaro, and has equal right with the Barber to cry, "Largo al factotum." He builds theatres; he writes plays; he causes plays to be criticised.

The theatrical biography of the cardinal seems to begin with his patronage of Gros Guillaume, Gauthier Garguille, and Turlupin, three journeymen bakers, who, displaying a certain amount of crude and coarse humour in certain broad farces, became so exceedingly popular that they seriously frightened the actors of the Hôtel de Bourgogne, then esteemed the home of the classical and the legitimate. Let it not be imagined that, like the new actors of a more recent date, they contributed towards the fall of the drama. In the days of the "Turlupinades," as the farces were called, after the professional name of one of the actors therein, the French stage had not even begun to rise. Poets there were, indeed, of lofty ambition, but the results of their inspiration now only hold a place among the curiosities of literature. Pierre Corneille is the earliest dramatist who is allowed to hold a niche in the French Panthéon, and the first comedy of the immortal Pierre (Mélite) was not brought out before 1630. The Cid, from which his fame may be dated, did not see light till about six years afterwards. In 1634 the three drolls were all gathered to their fathers, dying, it is said, in the same week, in consequence of the terror with which they were seized on finding themselves involved in a serious scrape (owing to an exaggerated imitation, on the part of Gros Guillaume) by one of the Parisian magistrates.

When the haughty artists of the Hôtel de Bourgogne complained to the cardinal of the misconduct of Turlupin and Co., his eminence resolved to look into the rights of the case, and inviting the three trespassers to the Palais Cardinal—the present Palais Royal—which he had recently built, induced them to give a taste of their quality in his presence, an alcove being the stage on which they were to display their abilities. So successful was their performance that the discomfited company of the Hôtel de Bourgogne were enjoined to take them into their own body; the cardinal remarking that whereas the more dignified artists always left him sad, the introduction of the comic element would, doubtless, prove beneficial.

The joke which so much tickled the cardinal was not of the most refined order. Gros Guillaume, dressed as a grotesque woman, was supposed to be the wife of Turlupin, who, violently enraged, threatened to cut off the head of his ridiculous better half with a wooden sabre, but was suddenly appeased when the lady sued for mercy in the name of the cabbage soup which she had made for him the evening before. The sabre fell from his hands, and he exclaimed, "Ah, the hussy! she touches me on the weak point; the fat of the soup still sticks to my heart."

The victory of the three bakers over their adversaries did them, after all, more harm than

good; for, had they remained in their old quarter, they would not have got into a scrape with the magistrate.

In 1600 the company of the Hôtel de Bourgogne having divided itself into two parts, one of them left the old house to sojourn at the Marais, while at the Hôtel du Petit Bourbon an Italian company had been performing since 1577. Such was the predilection of the cardinal for theatrical amusement that one private theatre in the Palais Cardinal was not sufficient to meet his demands. A small theatre was constructed, capable of holding six hundred, and a larger one, that held more than three thousand. In the former of these the ordinary pieces of the Hôtel de Bourgogne and the Marais were represented; the latter was reserved for grand occasions.

But if Richelieu wished to be renowned as a Mæcenas of the drama, he was still more ambitious of the fame of a dramatic poet. He generally worked with assistants, who might be called professional, and who were the ostensible authors of the piece; but it was usually understood that, in some way or other, it proceeded from the cardinal, and, consequently, fault could not be found with it, save at the risk of giving offence in high quarters.

The poetical assistants were usually five in number, and the first piece that resulted from the grand combination of intellectual labour seems to have been a comedy, entitled *Les Thuilleries*. This, it appears, was constructed by the cardinal, and written by the five, one of whom—no less a person than Corneille, whose Cid, however, had not yet seen the light—suggested that the plan of the third act might be advantageously altered. Far from taking the wholesome advice kindly, Richelieu told Corneille that he ought to have an "esprit de suite"—an expression proper to the idiomatic tongue of the cardinal rather than to that of Parisians in general. It was, in fact, an euphemism for "blind obedience."

Colletet, another of the five, and likewise a member of the French Academy, afforded more unmixed satisfaction. Three lines which he wrote in reference to the piece of water in the Thuilleries were considered so exceedingly felicitous by the cardinal, that he rushed at once to his *escritoire*, and taking out fifty pistoles, thrust them into the hand of the fortunate genius, at the same time declaring that this sum was only intended to reward the specially beautiful lines, and that the king himself would not be wealthy enough adequately to reward the rest. The gem so highly prized may be construed in English thus:

The duck bedews herself with liquid mud,
Then with brave voice and widely flapping wings
Rouses the drake, that lingers at her side.

The happy man expressed his gratitude in a couplet, which declared how gladly he would sell his whole library at the price which the cardinal had given for a few lines. Whatever may be deemed the merit of these lines, on

them only depends the fame of Colletet. He put into verse a tragedy called *Cyniade*, which had been written in prose by the Abbé d'Aubignac, and which, although produced, has since sunk into oblivion; but the three lines and the grateful couplet are to be found in every collection of French theatrical anecdotes.

Far more celebrated than Colletet was Jean Chapelain, who wrote the prologue to *Les Thuilleries*, and who was likewise one of the earlier members of the Academy; for he has left behind him the reputation of being the very worst French poet that ever put pen to paper. However, the unwieldy poem on the subject of the Maid of Orleans, which was entitled *La Pucelle*, and which raised him to the summit of his bad eminence, did not make its appearance till more than twenty years after the first performance of the cardinal's comedy at the Palais Royal, which took place in 1635. This prologue, at any rate, answered its purpose; for Richelieu was so highly pleased with it, that he requested Chapelain to lend him his name, adding that in return he would lend him his purse on some future occasion.

Middling as the plays might be that were issued by the dramatic firm of Richelieu and Co., there was at the time glory in being connected with them. The illustrious five had a bench to themselves in the best part of the theatre; their names were honourably mentioned in the prologue, and their pieces were always played in the presence of the king and court.

Pierre Corneille was the only poet of the five who attained a really great reputation. Of the rest the most noted was Desmarets de Saint Sorlin, who, it seems, had not the least natural inclination to become a dramatic poet, but whose genius, latent even to himself, was somehow detected by the cardinal. The light which he possessed unknown he would willingly have kept under a bushel, even after it had been discovered by the great man; but Richelieu pressed him so hardly to try his hand at a plot, that refusal at last became dangerous. The plot once achieved, some other gifted mortal might write the verse. At all events, the cardinal wished to break in the recalcitrant man of talent by degrees.

Working with the fear of Richelieu before his eyes, Desmarets produced the skeleton of a comedy called *Aspasie*, the success of which, with his patron, literally exceeded his hopes; for whereas he had done all that he had desired to do, and a great deal more, he was now enjoined to write the verse, and encouraged by the remark that no other was worthy to perform a task so noble. *Aspasie* was accordingly finished, in spite of the poet's repugnance, played in the presence of the Duke of Parma, and, by command of his eminence, applauded to the skies.

Left to himself, Desmarets would have preferred epic to dramatic poetry; and when Richelieu, rendered more urgent than ever by the success of *Aspasie*, proposed that he should supply a similar work every year, he endeavoured to shield himself against the new infliction by

alleging that his hours were fully occupied by the composition of an heroic poem on the subject of the ancient King Clovis, of which he had already written two books, and which would throw the poetic lustre over France in general, and the cardinal in particular, and make the reign of Louis the Thirteenth famous in the annals of poesy. The man who wants a comedy is not to be put off with an epic, and Richelieu, who had given Desmarets two snug places under government, besides making him a member of the Academy, replied that the serious duties of his protégé demanded more recreation, and that the composition of dramatic pieces was a light and pleasant amusement. He added, more than a lifetime would be required for the completion of Clovis; and in this respect he was wrong, for in 1657, more than twenty years after the production of *Aspasie*, the ponderous epic appeared in twenty-six cantos, which were afterwards reduced to twenty.

Desmarets having been thus fairly bagged by the cardinal, the conqueror and the captive set their shoulders to the wheel, and turned out a comedy called *Les Visionnaires*, which really acquired something like a grand reputation. The noise that it made originated no doubt in the will of the all-potent cardinal, but it was a good loud noise at any rate, and owed much of its wide-spreading effect to the circumstance that it was virtually a "hit" at actual celebrities of the day. The *Visionnaires* named in the title were persons respectively distinguished by some particular crotchet, and all the initiated among the audience were perfectly aware for whom the dramatic portrait was intended. One lady could bestow her affections on none but Alexander the Great, and she was understood to represent Madame de Sablé, one of the most famous of the so-called "précieuses," who had dared to repel the advances of the cardinal himself, and who was castigated in the play accordingly. The arch intriguer, Madame de Chavigny, who is so conspicuous in the history of Anne of Austria, figured as the coquette of the story. And there was a third female "visionary" who was never happy save at the theatre, and who was meant for the great Madame de Rambouillet, queen and hostess of "précieuses" in general. All this was vastly amusing.

Many persons have learned by worldly experience that it is easier to form a connexion than to get rid of one, and this lesson was received by Desmarets, who, from the time when *Les Visionnaires* was first brought out, could not write a piece without exciting a suspicion that the cardinal had a finger in the pie. There was no direct information to the effect that a tragedy called *Roxane*, which was brought out in 1640, had any other author than Desmarets; but the world insisted that the cardinal had lent his valuable assistance. On the strength of this belief the poet Voiture, renowned in his day, extolled the play in the most disgusting spirit of adulation; and results proved that the hypothesis of the cardinal's partnership was the safest, if not the most correct that could be adopted; for the

Abbé d'Aubignac, a man of decided talent and erudition, was not allowed a seat in the French Academy; nor could his rejection be ascribed to any cause, save his atrocious opinion, openly expressed, that Roxane was but an indifferent work after all.

But the dramatic work in which Richelieu took the greatest pride was the tragedy *Mirame*, of which Desmarets was the only nominal author, but which certainly owed its existence partly to the cardinal, who built the large private theatre in the Palais Royal with the sole view of producing it in effective style. On the first representation the play failed miserably, and Richelieu, in despair, sent for Desmarets, who shook in his shoes on receiving the summons, and had the precaution to take with him a friend, in whose practical wisdom he felt great confidence. "Sad want of taste in the French," cried the cardinal, as they both entered; "they don't even like *Mirame*." "Nay, your Eminence," said the judicious friend, "the public is not to blame—still less the author of that piece; but those actors—ah those actors! Your Eminence must have noticed, not only that they had not learned their parts, but that they were disgracefully intoxicated." Richelieu found the explanation satisfactory, and the second performance of *Mirame*—the actors having been duly admonished, and the audience carefully selected—went off with the most brilliant success, the cardinal himself being the ringleader of approbation, violently using hands and feet in the work of applause, and sometimes thrusting his body far out of his box to secure silence and a proper appreciation of the choice passages.

Much less fortunate was Europe, another joint production, which, like *Mirame*, was nominally the sole work of Desmarets, and the dullness of which must have been surprising. The interest of the piece was intended to be purely political; allegorical representations of Spain, France, and other European countries, stalk upon the boards, and discourse of their power, their resources, and their relations with each other. Richelieu, when the work was complete, found it so very admirable that, in order to have a special opinion, he sent it to the French Academy, with the request that the forty members of that grave body would favour him with an impartial opinion. The Academicians, forgetting for the nonce that they were the cardinal's creatures, looked rather at the letter than at the spirit of this request, and returned the play with such a severe criticism that his eminence, stung to the quick, tore up the manuscript, and flung it into the fireplace. Had the season been winter, the cardinal would have been spared further annoyance, and a fight famed in the annals of French literature would have been avoided; but, as it happened, the season was spring, and there was no fire; so

the cardinal, who had changed his mind in the course of the night, was enabled to collect the precious fragments in the morning, and to have a fair new copy made with all possible speed. A few slight alterations alone distinguished the second from the first edition of the play, and the intellect of the Academicians had undergone an amelioration likewise. They now clearly saw that their approval was expected, and, like wise and learned gentlemen as they were, they sent in praise without measure, having carefully avoided a reperusal of the work, partly to save themselves trouble, partly to avoid every risk that an unfavourable impression might be revived.

But the misfortunes of Europe were not to be averted. Elated with the applause of the Academy, the cardinal could no longer be content with a private triumph, but must needs have his play brought out at the Hôtel de Bourgogne, the great public theatre, during the first "run" (as we should now say) of the *Cid*. Besides his earlier comedies, Corneille had already produced a tragedy on the subject of *Medea*, with slight success; but the *Cid*, brought out in 1636, was a work to which nothing comparable had ever been seen in Paris, and about which everybody was in ecstasy. Into the midst of the general enthusiasm was thrust the poor insipid Europe, doomed to confront a throng composed of people in general, and consequently including some irreverend souls who feared not Richelieu. So when, after the termination of the play, one of the actors announced it for repetition on the following day, unequivocal sounds of disapprobation arose on all sides, and a general cry was raised for the all-popular *Cid*. A severe critique written on Corneille's play by the Academy, at the instigation of the cardinal, in consequence of this mishap, is among the memorabilia of French literary history.

A thought has occurred to us while collecting the materials for this paper. The generality of Englishmen, including those who are passionately fond of French prose, have a natural antipathy to French heroic verse, and avoid Corneille and Racine with an instinctive dread of boredom, which only the genius of a Rachel was able to subdue. To the educated Parisian, a contest between Richelieu and his creatures on one side, and the great Corneille on the other, place the former in a purely ridiculous position; but do not doubt whether many Englishmen, master of the French language, would, without having undergone an acclimatising process, arrive at the conclusion that a play by Desmarets was so very, very bad, granted that the best tragedy by Corneille was so very, very good.

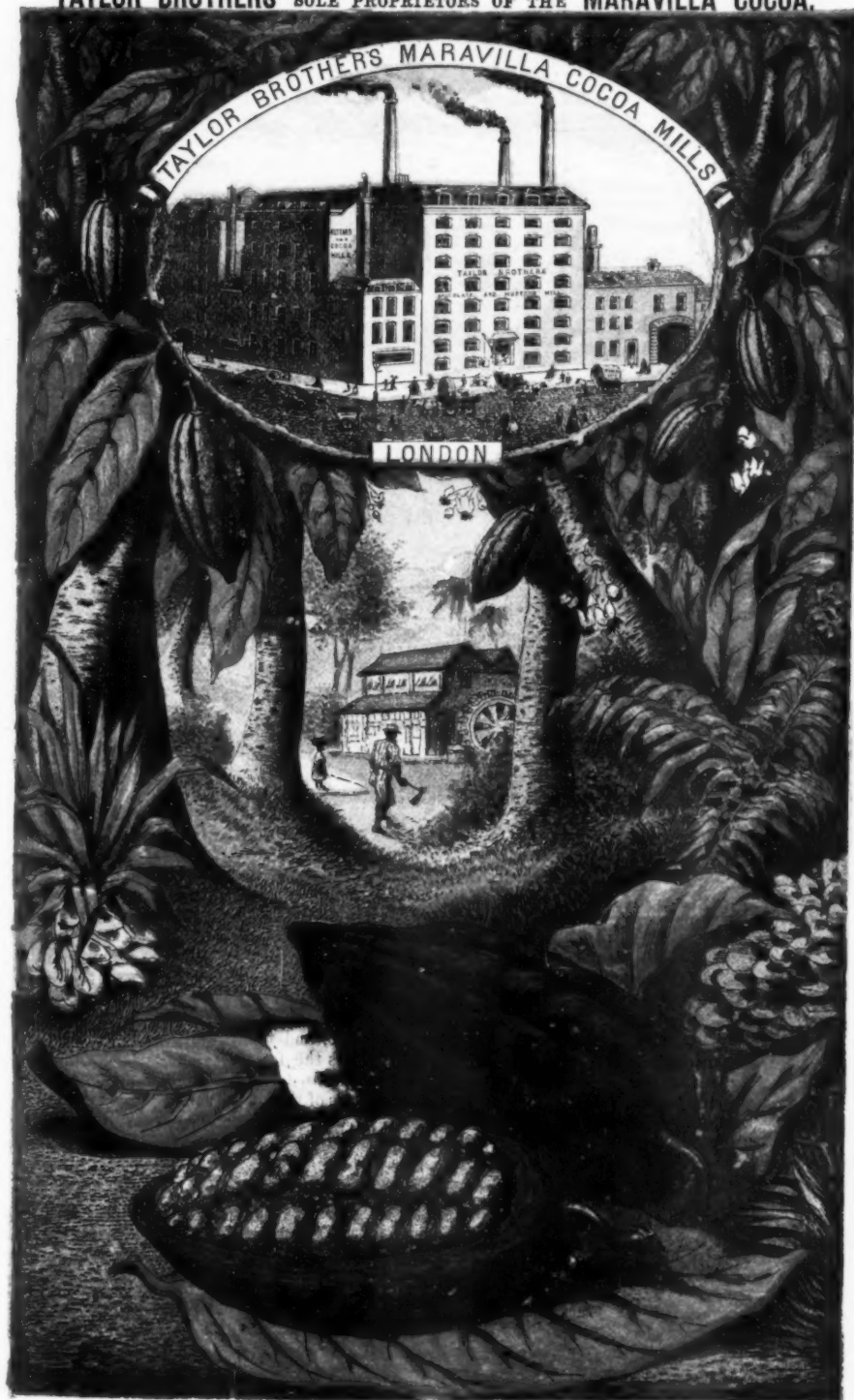
HOLIDAY ROMANCE,

By CHARLES DICKENS,

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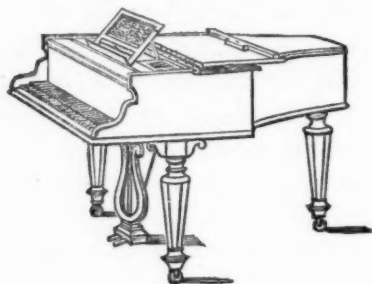
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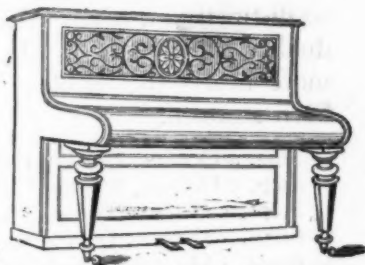
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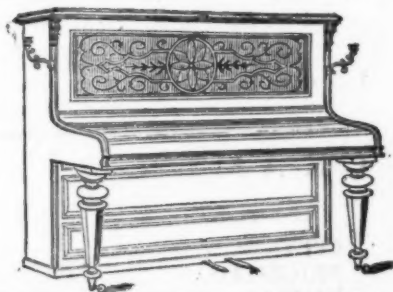
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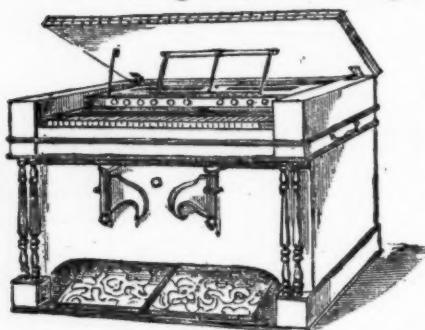


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POEMS AND SONGS. In the January Number is a notable Collection of Abyssinian Popular Songs. Following this are admirable pieces, selected with extreme care.

LETTERS TO DEAR OLD GRANNY. By the Author of "Letters from Dear Old Granny."

SEASONABLE PAPERS. As, in the January Number, "Christmas Mummers and Mumming Plays."

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Secondly, Mr. JOHN TILLOTSON, who has, of a certainty, taken the position as Historical Novelist formerly held by the late Mr. J. G. EDGAR, produces a tale than which nothing can be more interesting in point of period, plot, or style. The period is that in which the enormous power of Spain received its first shock at the hands of a few brave, patient, enduring men on a nook of land rescued from the sea; the period when the Dutchmen fought for their own and others' liberty, and swore they would worship as they chose.

One of the most careful and painstaking of our Naturalists contributes a series of papers, wherein will be considered how in the aspects and workings of Nature we see the hints that have been given to inventors. Never so much as now was it necessary for the young to learn to observe, to increase their technical knowledge, and to become acquainted with the powers and processes of Nature.

Without stories of the deeds of our Army and Navy we should hardly consider our Magazine presentable to a lad; these will, therefore, be included.

Short Stories and Particular Sketches, Ballads, Puzzle Pages, and Sports and Athletics, will receive the attention due to these subjects.

Mechanics and Manufactures will be especially treated during the year.

Our Prize Essays, which have always occasioned great interest, and led in many cases to excellent results, as far as the subsequent fortunes of the essayists have been concerned, will be continued.

A special feature, also, will be observable in the BOY'S OWN MAGAZINE of this year. A series of important papers, highly illustrated, will continue through the year. This series, called "The World's Explorers," will comprise the Discoveries and Travels of Celebrated Voyagers. Thus, "Bruce and Abyssinia" is the title of the first paper, contained in the January Number, and following this is the "Story of Astoria," Marco Polo, Mungo Park, Vasco da Gama, and a host of others less known, but the heroes of equally grand enterprises, will be presented in the course of the year.

BEETON'S BOY'S OWN MAGAZINE for the New Year, 1868, will contain, therefore, amongst other matter—

THE FINGER OF FATE. By Captain Mayne Reid. Illustrated by a separate plate every month.

ONE OF THE BEGGARS. A Story of the Days of William the Silent. Illustrated by a separate plate every month.

ALF RINGBOLT. A Tale of the Sea.

NATURE'S HINTS TO INVENTORS.

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CONTENTS OF No. I.

The Screw Pine (*Pandanus*) and its Allies. By John R. Jackson. (*With a Coloured Plate.*)
 The Silkworm Delusion. By Shirley Hibberd.
 The Rocky Mountain Goat. By John Keast Lord, F.Z.S. (*With a Coloured Plate.*)
 Womankind: In all Ages of Western Europe. By Thomas Wright, F.S.A. Chapter I. Woman in Gaul and Britain under the Celt and Roman.
 The History of Ozone. By C. W. Heaton.
 The Microscope in Education.
 Meteorological Observations made at the Kew Observatory. By G. M. Whipple. (*With a Plate.*)
 Astronomical Notes for February. By W. T. Lynn, B.A., F.R.A.S.
 Storms and Hurricanes: Their Motions and Causes. By Henry White, Ph. D.

Archæologia.

Progress of Invention :—

Manufacture of Alcohol.
 Fireproof Floors and Ceilings.
 Indicating Taps.
 Conversion of Cast into Wrought Iron.
 Portable Lamps.
 Vinegar Manufacture.

Proceedings of Learned Societies.

Literary Notices.

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